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# **CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: A TEST IN PERU**

Proefschrift aangeboden tot het verkrijgen van de graad van  
Doctor in de Psychologie

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If, like Odysseus, you try to get home to Ithaka,  
be lucky in your journey - let it be a long one  
packed with fascination.

Don't be aghast at giants or fear the one-eyed man  
or the angry Poseidon:  
these are only fables.

Your mind exalted,  
your spirit and body purified through thought,  
you need not witness these monsters  
unless you carry them with you  
locked in imagination.

This wonderful Ithacan journey -  
pray it may be long  
full of happy summer mornings  
when you enter new harbours never seen before  
tense with excitement, your heart thudding heavily.

Do not omit to visit those trading stations  
set up by Phoenicians  
who in their wanderings to fabulous regions  
amass the most beautiful mother pearl and coral, amber and ebony,  
and exquisite perfumes of all sorts.

Do not forget to study at great Egyptian  
centres of learning, to extend your wisdom  
by the words of the wise.

Your destination, Ithaka, keep always in mind:  
that's where you're heading; that's your purpose.  
But better that your journey is not hurried  
(Ithaka is always waiting)  
better if it takes you years to get there;  
better if you're old when you reach the island  
enriched beyond expectation with experience  
- then Ithaka, your goal, on coming home  
will not disappoint you.

It was for this you wandered,  
for this you came.  
Having seen so many wonders,  
you accept her: this is your home, your island.  
You come with full hands; and you were not fooled,  
wise with experience, into thinking  
Ithaka other than she is.

(Kavafis, K., *Ithaka*)



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I take the best from this journey; take you all in my heart.



## **Conceptual and Empirical Similarities and Differences between Job Insecurity and Employability: A Test in Peru**

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Co-promoter: Prof. Dr. Dora Herrera

Employability is frequently mentioned in the job insecurity literature. However, the relationship between these two concepts has mostly been taken for granted while there are few studies which actually examine it (e.g., Silla, De Cuyper, Gracia, Peiró, & De Witte, 2009; De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008). Additionally, there is a lack of consensus regarding the employability concept (Fugate & Sels, 2003a) which might turn into a constraint when studying its relation to job insecurity.

This project intends to elaborate upon a conceptual and empirical comparison between job insecurity and employability. The aims are: (1) to develop a clear employability concept in parallel with an earlier job insecurity definition, (2) to establish the conceptual and empirical relation between these concepts, (3) to investigate their antecedents and (4) consequences on employees' well-being. We applied our research in Lima, Peru, in a convenience sample of 651 employees from 8 organisations. Until now most job insecurity studies come from Europe or the US. Results are based upon regression analyses performed on our sample. We controlled for age, gender and organisation.

Regarding the first aim, we define job insecurity as the employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job, and we developed a similar definition for employability, namely the employee's perceived possibilities to make job transitions, that is, to gain a job in the external labour market. Job insecurity and employability share their focus upon perceptions and the future. However, whereas job insecurity focuses on the present job and the internal labour market, employability concentrates on a potential job and the external labour market.

Regarding the second aim, we hypothesize a negative relationship between employability and job insecurity. The main reason is that job insecurity is basically about *losing* one's job, whereas employability is about *gaining* a new job. This hypothesis is empirically supported albeit this association was fairly weak.

Regarding the third aim, namely antecedents of job insecurity and employability, we accounted for four groups of antecedents: personality (i.e., core self-evaluations), interplay with the family environment (e.g., married or cohabiting as compared to single workers), interplay with the work environment (e.g., educational level, occupational level) and perceived internal and external labour market (e.g., perceived recent organizational changes, perceived number of employment opportunities). We established that personality is the most important predictor of job insecurity. In comparison, work-related variables appear to be the major antecedents for employability.

Regarding the fourth aim, namely consequences of job insecurity and employability, we established that job insecurity is associated with impaired well-being, with the exception of career dissatisfaction. The relationship with burnout and psychological distress is particularly strong. In contrast, employability's relation with well-being is more complex. It has a positive association with both well-being (i.e., career satisfaction) and impaired well-being (i.e., cynicism).

To sum up, the conceptual and empirical comparison of employability and job insecurity indicates that they are negatively related and that they are two distinctive concepts with different antecedents and consequences. Thus, they are not part of the same continuum. Furthermore, our findings challenge classical assumptions regarding employability's benefits for workers. It might be suggested that although employability is conceived in the literature as the new job security, this might be a simplistic view which hinders further understanding of this phenomena and its association with job insecurity.





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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION: OUR RESEARCH AIMS**

Job insecurity and employability research have developed rapidly in the late 80's following profound labour market changes that were rising at the time (Sverke, Hellgren, Näswall, Chirumbolo, De Witte, & Goslinga, 2004; De Witte, 1999, 2005; Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006a; Forrier & Sels, 2003a). The nature of work was affected by the measures that companies took in order to adapt to increased global competition, rapid technological development and fast evolution towards a service-centered industry (Sverke et al., 2004). More specifically, organizations underwent personnel reductions and increased the number of subcontracted workers (Sverke et al., 2004). These new work conditions were accompanied by rising feelings of insecurity among the workers (De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008); a situation that spurred researchers' interest for job insecurity especially for its consequences (Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2002). The new work conditions furthermore implied that workers had to "be more flexible to remain competitive on the internal and external labour market" (Berntson et al., 2006a, p. 224). In other words, workers had to enhance their employability in order to be hired by current or future employers. Most importantly, employability has been frequently mentioned in the job insecurity literature. However, the relation between these two concepts has been mostly taken for granted while there are few studies which actually examine it (e.g., Silla, De Cuyper, Gracia, Peiró, & De Witte, 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008).

Job insecurity has been portrayed in the literature as a work stressor with detrimental consequences for the individual and the organization. As a result, research on the field has focused on its outcomes whereas only a number of studies have examined its potential predictors (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti, & Happonen, 1999a; Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, & van Vuuren, 1991; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Furthermore, thus far, job insecurity research has been mostly developed in Europe and the US, whereas this topic remains understudied in other contexts such as Asia, Africa and Latin-America. As regards to employability, the lack of consensus with respect to this concept (Forrier & Sels, 2003a) has constrained research development owing to confusion in the field. This has resulted in disagreements about which variables may be considered as antecedents, consequences or even part of the concept itself (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). Nevertheless, it is increasingly difficult to ignore employability in the context of the new labour market, which underlines the importance that flexibility and adaptability might have on workers' well-being.

This project intends to elaborate upon the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability. Following this our aims are as follows (see in the next page *Figure 1. Research Model*): (1) to develop a clear definition of employability in parallel with an earlier job insecurity definition, (2) to establish the conceptual and empirical relation between both concepts, (3) to investigate their antecedents, and (4) to study their consequences on employees' well-being. In addition, to strengthen the test of our concepts we applied our research in a non-European context. We will discuss each aim in detail in later chapters. In order to accomplish our aims, the present dissertation is distinguished by four parts.

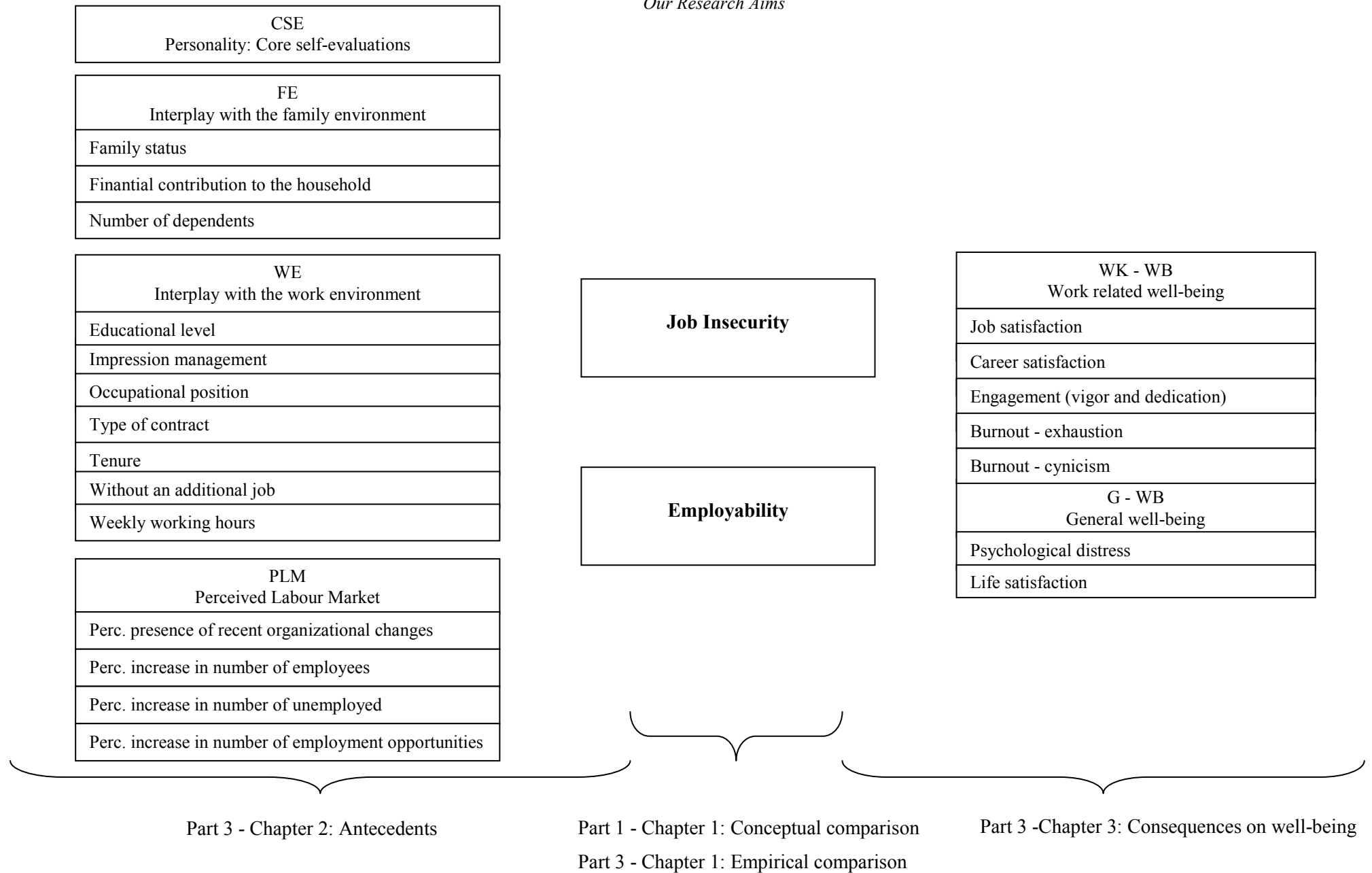
Part 1 is composed by two chapters. Chapter 1 (Job insecurity and employability: Definition and conceptual debate) focuses on solving an initial main obstacle for achieving our goals which relates to conceptual vagueness. We start by establishing our definitions of job insecurity and employability as well as elaborating a conceptual comparison between both concepts. Chapter 2 (Job insecurity and employability: Relevance for the context of Metropolitan Lima): as our aim is to strengthen the test of our concepts by applying our research in a non-European context, we highlighted some characteristics of the Labour Market of Metropolitan Lima which might indicate the presence of job insecurity and employability.

Part 2 (Methodology) presents the research design, the procedure, the measurement instruments, characteristics of our sample and the results of the preliminary analyses we performed in order to test the validity (i.e., principal component analysis) and reliability (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) of our scales. Additionally, we present a correlation table of our scales and an overview of the analyses we conducted to examine our research questions.

Part 3 (Studies and results) comprises three chapters: the empirical relationship between job insecurity and employability (Chapter 1), their antecedents (Chapter 2) and their well-being outcomes (Chapter 3). In each chapter, we explain the theoretical framework and earlier findings which led us to formulate our hypotheses. Additionally, we include details of the hierarchical regression analyses that we conducted to test our hypotheses, as well as our conclusions regarding the results.

Finally, Part 4 includes a summary of our research's findings (Chapter 1), limitations and strengths (Chapter 2), implications (Chapter 3), future research avenues (Chapter 4) and general conclusions (Chapter 5).

*Our Research Aims*



*Figure 1. Research Model.*



## **PART 1**

# **JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: CONCEPTUAL DEBATE AND RELEVANCE IN THE LABOUR MARKET OF METROPOLITAN LIMA**



## **PART 1**

### **JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: CONCEPTUAL DEBATE AND RELEVANCE IN THE LABOUR MARKET OF METROPOLITAN LIMA**

Our main aim is to establish the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability. To strengthen the test of our concepts we will apply our study in a non-European context, that is, Latin-America and more specifically Metropolitan Lima which rises as viable context to approach. In this way, our research would contribute by representing an initial bridge between the European theoretical and empirical advances towards the Latin-American context.

Taking the above into consideration, in the first chapter of this section, we provide a general view of the dominant policy and research perspectives on job insecurity and employability in Latin-America, the United States and Europe. Then, we present the research choices that we took to establish our job insecurity and employability definitions, which in turn, allowed us to elaborate a conceptual comparison between both concepts. In the second chapter, we concentrate on some characteristics of the labour market of Metropolitan Lima which might indicate the presence of job insecurity and employability. Finally, we discuss the relevance of introducing this line of research in this context.





# **CHAPTER 1**

## **JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUAL DEBATE**

The definitions used in this dissertation for job insecurity (i.e., employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job) and employability (i.e., employee's perceived possibilities to make job transitions, that is, to gain a job in the external labour market) have originated in the European tradition and specifically from a subjective conceptual approach. Since the present dissertation intends to be a stepping stone in a bridge towards the Latin-American context, it is important to be acquainted as well with the concept development in this region. The aim of this chapter is twofold: (1) to provide an overview of the dominant perspectives on job insecurity and employability in Latin-America, the United States and Europe, and (2) to explain the path and choices made in order to build up our definitions. It is noteworthy that it is not our intention to present an exhaustive literature overview. Instead, our objective is to outline some trends and to discuss issues that could have particular relevance for our definitions and later chapters.

The present chapter comprises two sections. In line with our aims, the first section begins by providing an overview of the main job insecurity perspectives developed in Latin-America, particularly in Peru, the United States and Europe. This outline considers policy level approaches and, with more emphasis, those advanced in the field of psychological research. After presenting the different perspectives, a comparison is elaborated between them. Then, we focus on the existing conceptual debate on job insecurity and explain the choices made to establish our definition. In the second section, the steps followed in the previous section are also applied to employability. A clear employability concept has been developed with parallels to our earlier job insecurity definition. Finally, the conceptual similarities and differences between our job insecurity and employability definitions are discussed.

## 1. JOB INSECURITY

### 1.1. Dominant conceptual perspectives in Latin-America, United States and Europe

#### *Latin-American and Peruvian approaches vis-à-vis job insecurity*

In Latin-America and Peru, the topic of job insecurity has been mainly approached at a policy level and as part of a wider phenomenon which is precarious jobs. In this sense, some organizations such as the International Labour Office (ILO) have played a crucial role in rising awareness regarding the fact that the employment problem goes beyond unemployment and thus, may affect a larger part of the population who perform jobs characterized by conditions that hinder their chances for personal and economic development. This wake up call goes in line with ILO's declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and more specifically the right to have a decent work, that is, one which fulfills conditions of freedom, equity, safety and human dignity (Somavia, 1999). Safety or security has been defined as stability in the work relationship and it is a component which has gained importance in the evolution of the decent work concept (ILO, 2008). In recent years, ILO has made efforts to measure decent work (ILO, 2008). As regards to stability and security at work, there have been shortcomings for establishing a main indicator. Figures of informal and temporary employment have been proposed as part of this component, while job tenure for more than a year has been established as a proxy (ILO, 2008). In conclusion, it might be argued that the security of employment component puts the emphasis on insecurity rather than on security as such, is based on the objective contract situation (i.e., holding a temporary contract or no contract at all) and focuses on the present. Even more, the proxy for security of employment, that is, job tenure for more than one year, puts the focus on the past.

ILO's promotion of decent work takes into special consideration the Americas and Africa due to the high prevalence of informal workers in these regions (ILO, 2008). Additionally, in Latin America and particularly in Peru, Argentina and Colombia, one of ILO's aims is to promote the modification of work legislation implemented during the 1990s which made more flexible the process of hiring and dismissing employees (ILO, 2008). The goal is that these modifications meet international labour standards as a means to ensure decent work, including employment security.

In line with ILO, the reports of the Peruvian Ministry of Labour and Promotion of the Employment present as well an objective definition of job insecurity framing it as temporary contract or working without a contract. It could be argued that in Peru and in Latin America in general, the perception of job insecurity still remains as a largely unknown area of study. Nevertheless, this is a situation that might be changing in recent years. For instance, the

Interamerican Development Bank (IDB) acknowledges the need to go beyond objective indicators of the quality of job and to take into consideration individuals' perception of their own work (IDB, 2008). The IDB raises this question because although objective indicators show that the informal sector and employment insecurity could be considered as an endemic phenomenon in Latin America and the Caribbean, still this is one of the regions in the world where more people report being satisfied with their work (IDB, 2008). A pioneer in taking into account what employees in the region think about their jobs is the Gallup Global Survey (Gallup Global Survey, 2006, 2007, 2008), which offers comparable data from more than 100 countries including 22 from Latin America and the Caribbean. The Gallup Global Survey, measures job insecurity by asking the respondents if they think that they could lose their jobs in the next six months. To sum up, recent approaches have developed in Latin America pointing out the importance of having a subjective conception of job insecurity, with losing and the future as central components. The Gallup measure of job insecurity may be classified as one-dimensional as it limits its scope to the cognitive dimension of job insecurity, leaving an affective component as fear aside.

As regards to the field of psychology, job insecurity in Latin America is still in an initial stage. At the moment, research on this topic has been carried out in Mexico (i.e., Juárez García, 2004, 2007), Brazil (i.e., Fisher, Oliveira, Nagai, Teixeira, Lombardi, Latorre, & Cooper, 2005) and Argentina (i.e., Leibovich, 2006) (Martínez, De Witte, & De Cuyper, in press). For the purposes of this section we will center on the definition given to job insecurity in the studies that have been done so far in the region. Regarding research in Latin America, we can differentiate two main approaches to job insecurity. The first one is aligned with international work stress research, more specifically with the Job Demand Control Model of Karasek (1986) which is one of the most widely used in the field. This is accompanied by the use of the Job Content Questionnaire (Karasek, 1998) which includes subscales for psychological demands, decision latitude, social support, physical demands and job insecurity. While Fisher and colleagues (Fischer et al., 2005) regard job insecurity as an additional psychological stressor of their study, in Juárez García's studies (2004, 2007) job insecurity plays a leading role. Another difference between these authors is the population on which they focus. While Fisher and colleagues' sample (Fisher et al., 2005) is comprised by teenager students, Juárez García's research (2007, 2004) addresses personnel of health centers such as nurses, doctors or psychologists.

Juárez García (2004, 2007) extended the role of job insecurity and conceived it as a job demand. Juárez García (2004) defined job insecurity as the uncertainty about keeping a job.

Later on, he extended this description to the *uncertainty feeling* that accompanies the low certainty to keep employment (Juárez García, 2007). This later definition intends to extend the dimensions of the concept by recognizing not only the existence of an affective component but also a cognitive one. It also refers to the future of the current job. Besides, it might be stated that although Juárez García (2007) prefers to use the term keeping, his definition still makes reference to losing the job. In addition, it is noteworthy that Juárez García (2004, 2007) mentioned the existence of previous research in the field done by Cedillo (1999) who worked on the Mexican validation of the Job Content Questionnaire (Karasek, 1998).

The second approach to job insecurity in Latin America could be named as a native one which has used a home-grown scale. In Argentina, Leibovich (2006) studied the impact of laboural instability (i.e., an objective and ongoing situation originated by constant changes in the labour market) on the individual's perceived malaise, that is, perceived symptoms related to the work context which are an expression of psychological exhaustion. The study included the measure of self-perception of laboural instability. Participants had to answer "How do you perceive your present laboural instability?" using the following response scale: it happens but it does not produce 'malaise', it causes a small 'malaise', it cause major 'malaise', it causes an excessive 'malaise', it causes panic-fear. Thus, Leivovich's (2006) definition of malaise implies at the same time components of actual job insecurity and its consequences on specific areas such as worries about money or health, not setting up a clear line between actual job insecurity and its consequences on the individual's well-being. Besides, it is a concept which looks at the past (i.e., the past six months). Similarly to Juárez García (2004), she addressed a group of psychologists.

### *The dominant US approach*

In this dissertation, the US perspective is included because it is relevant in the field of psychological research as we will see further on. At a policy level, job insecurity might be associated with job to job transitions and the use of terms such as job stability (related to job change and tenure) and job security. However, these issues are not frequently addressed and seem not to be relevant at a policy level. There might be two reasons for explaining this. Firstly, the US labour market is based upon low organizational boundaries and on individuals' agency on their own career development. Thus, high mobility might be expected even in times of strong economy. In this sense, job insecurity might be considered as a given contextual factor and even fostered by the system. Secondly, the government might not find

appealing the topic of job insecurity as no direct advantage might be seen from approaching this issue. For instance, job insecurity might have an impact on the individuals' retirement benefits but not a direct impact on the government. In the US system, retirement plans are established by the employer and not by the State. In fact, the more an individual changes jobs, the less benefits he or she will be entitled to receive.

At psychological research level, it is also important to have a clear view on the dominant US job insecurity perspective, as some terms might have a different meaning than in the European tradition. The objective and subjective approaches to job insecurity which will be explained further on, can also be found in the US tradition. In this perspective, the term job insecurity refers to the actual fact of losing the job and thus, it is an objective indicator (Probst & Brubaker, 2001). As regards to the subjective approach, we could take a look at the concepts of *job security* and *job security satisfaction* which might be portrayed as the US counterparts of our job insecurity definition. These two concepts and their measures have been developed by Probst (2003) one of the major representatives of the US tradition on job insecurity.

In this tradition, job security has been defined as the "employee's cognitive appraisal of the future of the job with respect to the level of stability and continuance of that job" as he or she knows it (Probst & Brubaker, 2001, p. 144). It is regarded as a cognitive resource used in self-regulatory activities for monitoring changes in the work environment (Probst & Brubaker, 2001). "This involves estimating the chances that one might be affected by an impending organizational transition, how one's job might change as a result, keeping up-to-date with organizational rumors, and the like" (Probst & Brubaker, 2001, p. 142). In order to measure this construct Probst (2003) developed the Job Security Index (JSI) with sample items such as "my job is almost guaranteed". Respondents indicated their answers in a 3-point scale; yes, ? or no.

Another important concept in this perspective is job security satisfaction (JSS). It has been defined as the employees' satisfaction with their perceived level of job security. The Job Security Satisfaction Scale (Probst, 2003) includes adjectives and short phrases which assess the perceived job security (e.g., 'sufficient amount of security' or "makes me anxious"). Although, JSS considers anxiety, it focuses on individuals' satisfaction with their job security level.

Probst (2003) portrayed job security as the individuals' description of their security level, while job security satisfaction would be the evaluation of it. Moreover, it is expected that job security satisfaction will mediate job security's effects on consequences such as well-

being and turnover (Probst, 2003). In fact, organizational changes are expected to influence directly job security but not job security satisfaction.

To sum up, the dominant US perspective (Probst, 2003) considers the individuals' appraisal of their labour market situation, looks towards the future of the present job and excludes perceived powerlessness as part of the concept. In fact, when Probst and her colleagues publish their work in European journals, they use the term job insecurity to refer to their job security concept (e.g., Probst, Stewart, Gruys, & Tierney, 2007). Other characteristics of the job security concept are that it is one-dimensional and limited to a cognitive component. In fact, it might be argued that the US approach has established a clear cut between what might be compared to a cognitive and an affective element of job insecurity, by introducing the concepts of job security and job security satisfaction. In addition, the emphasis of job security is on the individuals' description of their own job security level rather than focusing on the perceived probabilities of actual job loss. That would explain why the US perspective frames job security as a cognitive resource assigned to self-regulatory behaviours which the individuals might adjust in order to keep their job. Besides, the US perspective does not make a clear difference between keeping and losing the job. The statement behind this is the lack of distinction between threat of demotion and termination (Probst, 2003). Even more, it might be argued that the US perspective addresses 'job retainment' more strongly than job loss anticipation.

Following Voydanoff (1990, in Probst 2005) Probst introduces two additional terms: employment instability (i.e., forced early retirement) and employment uncertainty (i.e., concern about possible lay-off). It might be argued that employment instability relates to job insecurity as understood by Probst (2005), that is, the actual fact of losing the job. Employment uncertainty might be linked to job security, that is, a subjective approach to the phenomenon. As her description of job security, employment uncertainty might be considered a global approximation to job insecurity as it does not differentiate job loss from loss of job features.

### *The European perspective*

At a policy level, job insecurity might be associated with the topic of working conditions. For instance, there exists a European Conditions Survey (EWCS) by the European foundation for the improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Interestingly, this survey differentiates objective from subjective job insecurity. Objective job insecurity is presented as the equivalent of having a temporary contract, while subjective job insecurity puts the accent

on perceived employment stability. More recently, job insecurity has caught attention in the framework of flexicurity, which is defined as a balance between flexibility and employment security. Although job insecurity has been mentioned as an issue which must be considered in the European policy agenda because of its implications for society, no common European strategy has yet been set up concerning this topic.

As regards to research on the psychology field, the European tradition might be characterized by a continuous effort to clarify the nature and components of job insecurity, as well as to systematize its measurement and research line. As a result of this effort, there seems to be some points of consensus regarding the job insecurity concept which have shaped the European tradition.

Firstly, a subjective approach to job insecurity might have been favoured over an objective one (e.g., De Witte & Näswall, 2003; De Witte, 1999, 2005). This means that research's main focus is on the employees' sense of job insecurity rather than on objective indicators of a vulnerable labour market position such as temporary employment. It is important to precise that the subjective approach far from neglecting objective indicators, acknowledges their role as the labour market conditions which are interpreted by the employees in order to assess their own job insecurity.

Secondly, there seems to exist a shared view that a general sense of job insecurity is on the rise due to changes in the employee-employer relation (e.g., De Cuyper et al., 2008; Sverke et al., 2006). Concerning the job insecurity concept this view has served to highlight its involuntary nature and the fact that it comprises uncertainty regarding the future of the present job. In addition, new explanations for job insecurity have also been introduced such as the psychological contract violation hypothesis (e.g., De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006; De Witte & Näswall, 2003).

Thirdly, the European tradition has largely developed under the framework of occupational health psychology with a strong tendency to study job insecurity as a stressor with detrimental consequences particularly on employees' well-being. This would explain (1) the emphasis on insecurity rather than on security, (2) the link of job insecurity to the future as the anticipation of a stressful event and (3) the focus on the individual rather than on organizational job insecurity. With respect to this last aspect, although some representatives of the European tradition like Mohr (2004) have presented a four-phase model of job insecurity which includes job insecurity at the company level, it has not been until recently that a study has considered for instance job insecurity climate (i.e., Sora, Caballer, Peiró, & De Witte, 2008). As a final note, it is important to recognize the influential role that the

pioneer work “Job insecurity: Toward conceptual clarity” by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) had for setting up in motion the effort to systematize job insecurity research and for establishing the foundations towards the above mentioned points of consensus.

The issues of job insecurity which raise controversy relate to its dimensions (Sverke et al., 2004) as well as to the possible inclusion of powerlessness as part of the concept (e.g., Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). According to Sverke and colleagues (Sverke et al., 2004) there is still a lack of consensus on how to measure job insecurity largely because it has been defined both as a global and as a multidimensional phenomenon. As a result, different researchers focus on diverse facets of the concept. Nevertheless, the somehow scattered European research on job insecurity might be organized into two main trends: global (one-dimensional) and multidimensional. The global or one-dimensional view of job insecurity focuses on one aspect of this phenomenon in order to assess the employees’ overall concern of losing their job (Sverke et al., 2004). Thus, we can find measures focused on the perceived probability or fear of losing the job (Sverke et al., 2004). Some examples are “How large, in your opinion, is the probability that you will become unemployed in the near future?” (De Witte, 1999), “How do you assess the probability of losing your job in the near future?” (Mohr, 2000) and “How do you feel in your present job?” (Ferrie, Shipley, Newman, Stansfeld, & Marmot, 2005). As global measures relate to perceived threat of imminent job loss they have been usually applied in the context of organizational crisis or change, in which job insecurity is considered as a first phase in the process of job loss (Mauno, Leskinen, & Kinnunen, 2001).

The most recent developments of the European tradition have been in favour of a multidimensional approach. This approach assesses different aspects related to the perceived threat of losing the job or losing valued job features. Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) promoted this approach as an alternative to the disadvantages of a global approach. The authors argued that global measures were limited to assess complex variables like job insecurity as different people may use “the same response to refer to quite different aspects of the phenomenon” (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984, p. 440). In the multidimensional approach there exists a conceptual debate regarding the following dimensions:

1. Quantitative and qualitative: quantitative refers to the perceived threat of losing the job itself, while qualitative refers to the loss of valued job features. For example, the measure of Hellgren, Sverke and Isaksson (1999) with sample items “I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to” and “My future career opportunities in this organization are favorable”.



2. Cognitive and affective components: the cognitive component refers to the perceived possibility of losing the job, while the affective component relates to the perceived fear of losing it. For instance, the scales of Borg and Elizur (1992) with sample items “I believe that my job is secure” (cognitive) or “I am concerned about the possibility of being dismissed” (affective); Sverke and colleagues (2004) with sample items “I think I might get fired in the near future” (cognitive) or “I worry about keeping my job” (affective); and Feldt, Kinnunen and Mauno (2000) with sample items “I am certain that my job will continue for a long time” (cognitive) or “I am worried about the possibility of being fired” (affective).

3. Powerlessness: there exists an ongoing discussion to determine if powerlessness is part or not of the job insecurity concept. According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) an individual’s job insecurity level arises from a perceived severity of the threat of losing the job or features of it in combination with the individual’s powerlessness to counteract this situation (Sverke et. al, 2004). In fact, Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) and Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984), consider it the core issue of job insecurity. Some European researchers like Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti and Happonen (1999) have included the powerlessness scale of Ashford, Lee and Bobko (1989) in their measure of job insecurity. A sample item is “I have enough power in this organization to control events that might affect my job”. Vander Elst, De Witte and De Cuyper (WAOP, 2008) however demonstrated that powerlessness is different from job insecurity. Instead, they see powerlessness as the mechanism that lead workers to suffer from job insecurity.

In view of the ongoing debate, Mauno and colleagues (2001) compared global and multidimensional scales of job insecurity. The authors suggest that the choice for a global or a multidimensional measure of job insecurity should be taken in accordance to the study’s objective. They recommend the use of global measures when studying other job characteristics in order to avoid overlap, and the use of multidimensional measures when the focus is on job insecurity.

### *Conclusions: A comparison between the dominant perspectives*

In the present section, we will establish the similarities and differences between the dominant job insecurity perspectives. To contribute with this comparison, we have included a summary table of the research in the United States and Europe where job insecurity has been studied in a systematic way. This summary table may be found in the next page.

Table 1. *Job Insecurity: Dominant Research Perspectives in the United States and Europe.*

|                 | US                                | Europe   |   |  |  |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Approach        | Global                            | Global   | Multidimensional:<br>quantitative-qualitative   | Multidimensional: cognitive-<br>affective  | Multidimensional:<br>Powerlessness   |
| Leading authors | Probst (2003)                     | Mohr (2000)  | Hellgren et al. (1999)  | Borg & Elizur (1992)<br>Sverke et al. (2004)   | Kinnunen et al. (1999)<br>using the scale of Ashford<br>et al. (1989)                          |
| Focus           | Employees                         | Employees  | Employees   | Employees  | Employees  |
| Aim             | Overall concern of losing the job |  | Different aspects related to perceived threat of losing the job or losing valued job features   |  |  |
| Measures        | Job security level                | Perceived<br>probability or<br>perceived fear  | Perceived threat of losing<br>the job itself (QN) and<br>valued job features (QL)   | Perceived possibility and fear<br>of losing the job  | Powerlessness to counteract<br>job loss threat   |
| Sample item(s)  | “My job is almost<br>guaranteed”  | “How do you<br>assess the<br>probability of<br>losing your job in<br>the near future?” | “I am worried about<br>having to leave my job<br>before I would like to”,<br>“My future carrier<br>opportunities in this<br>organization are<br>favourable” | “I believe that my job is<br>secure”, “I am concerned<br>about the possibility of being<br>dismissed”, “I think I might<br>get fired in the future”, “I<br>worry about keeping my job” | “I have enough power in<br>this organization to control<br>events that might affect my<br>job” |

At a policy level, the topic of job insecurity has been approached as part of other phenomena in Latin-America (e.g., precarious employment also in the form of underemployment - few benefits, low remuneration, no job protection and little security for the future- ), the US (e.g., job to job transitions) and Europe (e.g., working conditions). In the psychological field, job insecurity research in Latin-America is still in an initial state (e.g., Juárez García, 2007; Leibovich, 2006). As regards to the US and European perspectives there are some agreements regarding job insecurity: the focus is on the individual, it is a concept that has always been related to the employed, there is a subjective approach to the phenomenon, there is a shared view that a general sense of job insecurity is on the rise due to changes in the employee-employer relation, job insecurity has an involuntary nature and it relates to uncertainty regarding the future of the present job. The fact that these agreements exist might be explained by the influential role that the article “Job insecurity: Toward conceptual clarity” of the Americans Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) had for systematizing the research of the time and for establishing the foundations for future points of consensus.

Nevertheless, there are important differences between both perspectives. Firstly, the US approach puts the emphasis on security rather than on insecurity. Secondly, while the US dominant approach represented by Probst (2003) supports a global (e.g., by not separating the loss of the job as a whole from the loss of job features) and one-dimensional approach (e.g., by only considering a cognitive component), the most recent developments of the European tradition have been in favour of a multidimensional approach (e.g., cognitive and affective component, quantitative and qualitative dimensions). Finally, while the European perspective is heavily focused on the consequences of job insecurity for the individual's well-being, the US perspective includes additional outcomes such as safety compliance (e.g., Probst & Brubaker, 2001) or creativity (e.g., Probst et al., 2007). The reason for this might be that these outcomes could be more interesting for US employers or could be more relevant in comparison to the workers' well-being due to the characteristics of the US labour market.

The topic which arises more controversy in job insecurity refers to its dimensions and its measurement. We can distinguish four main traditions which approach different aspects of this phenomenon: global job insecurity (e.g., Probst, 2003; Mohr, 2000), quantitative and qualitative job insecurity (e.g., Hellgren et al., 1999), cognitive and affective job insecurity (e.g., Borg & Elizur, 1992; Sverke et al., 2004) and powerlessness as part of job insecurity (e.g., Kinnunen et al., 1999). There are two further points which are important to mention. Firstly, these traditions do not exclude one another but may add up in studying a composite phenomenon like job insecurity. Thus, it is not uncommon to find researchers who combine

these traditions when establishing their measures. For instance, the scale of Sverke and colleagues (2004) contains sample items such as “I worry about keeping my job” (i.e., quantitative and affective components) and “I think I might get fired in the near future” (i.e., quantitative and cognitive components). Secondly, it is worth to recognize that in this dissertation we chose to focus on Probst (2003) as the main representant of the US perspective due to its influence in today’s research and her contribution to the field. Thus, although for comparison means we highlighted the global approach of Probst, we acknowledge that the multidimensional trend is also present in the US context (e.g., Ashford et al., 1989).

## **1.2. Our approach to job insecurity**

In this section, we will take an overview of the conceptual debate on which our job insecurity definition (i.e., *the employee’s perceived probability and fear of losing the current job*) has been built upon. This overview does not intend to be an exhaustive research review but to portray the main conceptual ongoing debates with the aim of explaining the choices upon which our job insecurity definition has been built upon.

### *Focus: employed vs. unemployed*

There exists a long tradition of studies examining the psychological effects of work, employment and unemployment (Winkelmann, 2009; De Witte, 2005). In this research field, job insecurity has raised as a very interesting concept for three main reasons. Firstly, due to its nature job insecurity might be stated as an interesting point in the spectrum of possible relationships between the individual and work. In fact, this concept has been previously portrayed as standing on a thin line between employment and unemployment as it relates to the employees’ concerns of becoming unemployed (De Witte, 2005, 1999). Secondly, it allows us to study the extent in which recent changes in the nature of work might have affected employees. In this respect, job insecurity literature has highlighted the fact that since the mid 70’s certain organizational practices such as downsizing, fusions or temporary contracts became more frequent. The main statement being that these practices have created new work conditions and thus, might have affected the relationship between employees and their jobs; more specifically these conditions might play a role in triggering a general sense of job insecurity. Taking this into consideration, it is not surprising that during the 80s Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) raised the need to concentrate efforts in systematizing the research on job insecurity which was going on at the time. It might be argued that if the great

depression raised the importance of studying unemployment, the consequences of the economic crisis of the mid 70s broadened the need to understand a new phenomenon which was job insecurity. Taking this into consideration, the accent on a negative concept like “insecurity” might have been in line with the large amount of studies done since the 30’s about unemployment which highlighted its negative consequences for the individual. In a way the threat to the job was beginning to be seen as detrimental as the lack of it. This might help to understand the reason for Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) to refer to insecurity rather than security and to portray job insecurity as a stressor. This might also explain why research has largely focused on job insecurity’s negative consequences for the employee (e.g., health and well-being) and for the employer (e.g., turnover intentions) (Sverke et al., 2002). Indeed, Sverke and colleagues (Sverke et al., 2004) mention that job insecurity begun to be studied in the 70’s, as it’s reverse: job security. By then, job insecurity had been studied as an aspect of job satisfaction. In 1975, Caplan and colleagues (Caplan, Cobb, French, Van Harrison, & Pinneau, 1975) were the first ones to refer to job insecurity however; it was still part of a work climate measure. Job insecurity began to be studied with more strength after the seminal work of Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984). They organized the existing knowledge with the aim of encouraging the development of a stronger theoretically based concept. The use of the term “insecurity” and the establishment of this phenomenon’s importance by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) was a turning point in the field. This modification indicated a change in how to address the security issue, reflected the changes that were taking place in the labour market with the consequent modifications of the employer–employee relationship, and changed the focus towards the negative consequences of lacking job security. It is noteworthy that as a cause of globalization, organizational practices such as downsizing have transcended European and US labour markets. Thirdly, job insecurity might be regarded as an important concept to understand more deeply the significance of work for an individual. For instance, although findings have consistently shown that the unemployed are affected by higher levels of psychological distress than the employed (Winkelmann, 2009; Creed & Macyntyre, 2001), research about the consequences of job insecurity and unemployment on well-being have shown that fearing the loss of one’s job could be as aggravating as actually becoming unemployed (De Witte, 2005, 1999). Indeed, Dekker and Schaufeli (1995) found that the certainty of dismissal had less negative effects than remaining in a position of possible job loss. This finding could be explained by the fact that anticipating a negative event may be as stressful as the event itself (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Furthermore, Sverke and colleagues (Sverke et al., 2004) mention that job insecurity is “often a prolonged experience which adds

to the fact that it might have more negative consequences than actual job loss has” (Sverke et al., 2004, p. 55).

To sum up, job insecurity is an important concept to understand the significance of work for an individual, especially in a context where objective work conditions that might trigger a sense of insecurity have become more frequent. Furthermore, although some parallels may be established with the unemployment literature particularly regarding its detrimental consequences for the individual, it is important to underline that job insecurity has been always related to the employed. This is stressed in our definition by using the term *employee* rather than only individual.

#### *Focus: subjective vs. objective approach*

It is interesting to notice that one of the first controversies regarding job insecurity was to determine its objective or subjective nature. This is not surprising if we take into account the long tradition that was already present regarding unemployment. The indication of being unemployed did not required a debate; it refers to the fact of not having a job and as such it is an objective measure. Thus, there is no space for a subjective-objective controversy. Most importantly, different disciplines and research fields such as economy or work psychology were able to define being unemployed in the same way. But the picture changes once we introduce a concept like job insecurity. Moreover, if we consider that the interest for this concept originated with the aim of understanding the impact of the changes that were taking place in the labour market, changes which might be objectively indicated such as being present in an organization which undergoes downsizing.

Both objective and subjective conceptualizations of job insecurity can be found in the literature. The objective conceptualization views job insecurity as a contextual phenomenon: job insecurity developed from objective circumstances that jeopardize job continuity. This means that job insecurity is independent from employee’s interpretation. This approach focuses on indicators such as the employee’s type of contract (e.g., temporary employment), a specific event taking place in the organization (e.g., downsizing, bankruptcy) or the labour market situation (e.g., high unemployment levels) (Sverke et al., 2004; De Witte & Näswall, 2003). In contrast, the subjective conceptualization of job insecurity considers this phenomenon as a result of the employee’s interpretation of the work environment. Thus, it focuses on the employee’s experience of job insecurity.

In order to solve the controversy regarding the subjective or objective nature of job insecurity, De Witte and Näswall (2003) compared both conceptualizations. Objective job

insecurity was operationalized as temporary employment due to the fact that some researchers like Pearce (1998) and Büssing (1999) regard it as a typical example for it. Their results showed that subjective job insecurity was more problematic than its objective variant. “It is not so much the contract ‘as such’ that is problematic, but rather the perception of it” (De Witte & Näswall, 2003, p. 177). Their findings suggest that job insecurity should be regarded as a subjective phenomenon. In fact, we could argue that objective measures of job insecurity are limited because they fail to explain why some employees may feel more insecure than others while facing the same work situation (Sverke et al., 2004). Furthermore, objective definitions fall short in explaining why job insecurity could rise as an important factor in seemingly unthreatening job contexts (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002). In fact, the experience of job insecurity results from the discrepancy between the desired and the actual levels of security (Sverke et al., 2004). This is a factor neglected by objective definitions of the concept. Actually, this discrepancy relates to the involuntary nature of job insecurity. This means that in order to experience job insecurity, the present job situation must not been chosen by the employee; he/she would prefer a higher security level concerning his/her job. Moreover, some findings suggest that job insecurity has negative effects on permanents’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment, whereas this is not the case for temporary workers (which is frequently considered an objective measure of job insecurity) (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006). Also, workers are likely to act upon perceptions rather than upon any objective situation (De Witte & Näswall, 2003), and thus, objective operationalisations may not predict employees’ responses. These shortcomings are overcome by a subjective conceptualization of the phenomenon.

In all, given the earlier arguments and the fact that most authors define job insecurity as a subjective phenomenon (De Witte, 1999, 2005), the present dissertation adopts the subjective approach. However, we acknowledge that job insecurity can not be reduced to a perception solely caused by personality (De Witte, 1999, 2005). Thus, we acknowledge that this subjective threat results from the employee’s interpretation of objective threats which are present in the work environment (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). That is the reason why although we have a subjective approach to job insecurity, we will also control some objective characteristics regarding work like for example type of contract. It is also interesting to notice that the subjective approach to job insecurity rises the nature of the concept as standing in the limit between unemployment and employment, focusing on the threat of the employed about becoming unemployed. Our definition concentrates on the sense of being insecure. It is also important to point out that this is more relevant for us as psychologists, while other disciplines

as for instance economics are more used to deal with harder indicators. The fact of situating job insecurity as a subjective phenomenon also underlines the idea that it implies and appraisal of the situation and thus, it goes with the research conception of job insecurity as a stressor. This helps to put the focus on the possible detrimental consequences for the individual, much in line which was previously studied in the unemployment field.

*Focus: the internal labour market*

Job insecurity may refer not only to the amount of uncertainty an employee has about his or her job continuity, but may also include the prevalence of certain job characteristics (Ashford et al., 1989; Borg & Elizur, 1992; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Whatever the case, this implies that the employee perceives an unclear future inside the employing organization. Thus, job insecurity has been always related to the internal labour market.

*Focus: losing vs. keeping*

The common denominator of most job insecurity definitions is the concern regarding the future continuity of the present job (De Witte, 2005). In other words, we could say that job insecurity's core concept is the fear and possibilities associated with losing the job. Definitions of job insecurity frame this issue as either losing the job (e.g., De Witte, 2005; Sverke et al., 2004) or keeping it (e.g., Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984; Heany, Israel, & House, 1994). De Witte (1999, 2005) states that there is an extensive line of research that considers job insecurity as a work stressor. Since this important and well developed line of research highlights the threat of becoming unemployed (anticipation of a stressful event), in other words, the perceived risk of losing one's job, we will use the term *losing* in our definition rather than *keeping*. We consider that *losing* is the term that best fits job insecurity's nature and its negative consequences. Besides, we will also include the employability variable in the present study and some authors, also use the word *keeping* when referring to employability definitions. Therefore, in order to draw a clear line between job insecurity and employability, we will use the term *losing* in our job insecurity concept. Furthermore, *losing* reflects better than *keeping* three important aspects related to job insecurity: uncertainty about the future, involuntary loss and powerlessness to counteract the threat. De Witte (2005) states that insecure employees perceive their future in the organization as unclear and unpredictable, implying that they can not take concrete actions to adequately face this situation. As a way of contrast, the term *keeping* might be related to the idea of the



employee taking actions in the present in order to face the threat. Thus, it might refer to a different construct than job insecurity and even a consequence of it.

*Focus: perceived probability and fear*

As we have seen in the previous section, there are various approaches concerning the dimensions of job insecurity. Our definition considers the cognitive-affective dimensions of job insecurity. These dimensions are one of the most studied (De Witte, 2005) and are also dominant in job insecurity measures (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Feldt et al., 2000; Borg & Elizur, 1992). The cognitive component of job insecurity refers to the perceived probability of losing one's job (e.g., "I believe that my job is insecure") while the affective one relates to the fear or worry that accompanies this threat (e.g., "I am concerned about the possibility of being dismissed") (Borg & Elizur, 1992). The cognitive aspect emphasizes that an anticipation of job loss must take place, while the affective component stresses that this probability is accompanied by anxiety levels. According to Borg and Elizur (1992) the cognitive and the affective components originate a specific level of perceived job insecurity. Thus, we consider that both components are necessary in order to assess job insecurity. Moreover, the cognitive-affective components approach finds explanations for the job insecurity phenomenon in the stress literature, where this concept is regarded as the anticipation of a stressful event "in such a way that the nature and continued existence of one's job are perceived to be at risk" (Sverke & Hellgren, 2002, p. 27). So, in line with the subjective approach to job insecurity, the use of the affective-cognitive components also stresses the fact that there is an appraisal of the situation by the individual.

As we have seen before, contrary to our definition, the job insecurity view of Probst (2003) has been limited to its cognitive component. It is also interesting to notice that some researches in their initial measures included only one of these components such as the cognitive one (e.g., De Witte, 1999), but that in later collaborations they have included both of them (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004). Following the latest trends in the field our definition considers the affective and cognitive dimensions of job insecurity.

*Focus: losing the current job vs. losing job features*

Hellgren and colleagues (1999) differentiated two aspects of job insecurity: quantitative and qualitative. These authors made this distinction following Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) who were the first to establish a difference between the threat of losing the job as a whole from losing valued job features. "What the individual perceives as potential loss of

continuity in a job situation can span the range from permanent loss of the job itself to loss of some subjectively important features of the job” (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984, p. 440).

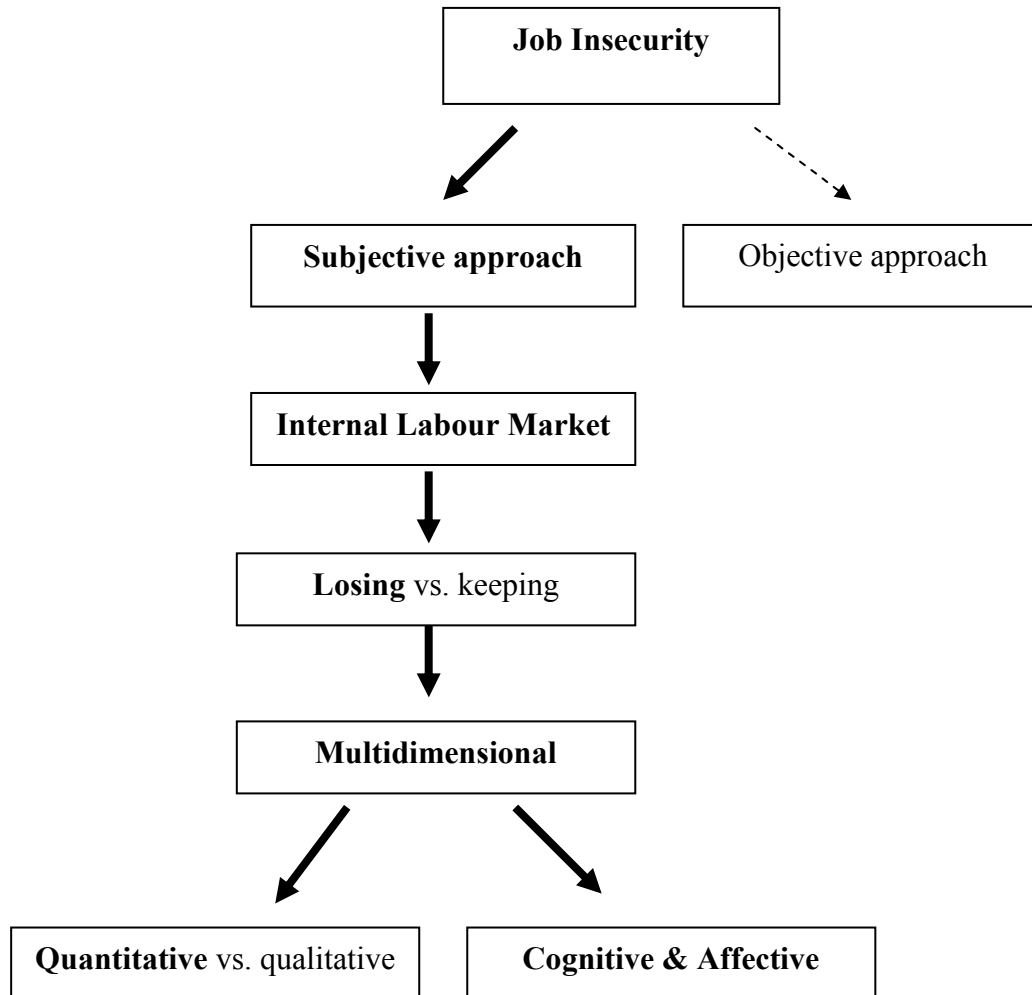
The quantitative dimension refers to concerns about the future existence of the job itself (e.g., “I am worried about having to leave my job before I would like to”). Quantitative loss is experienced in a negative way because a job not only satisfies the need for an economic income. According to Jahoda’s Latent Deprivation Theory (1982), employment has both manifest (i.e., provide an income) and latent functions (e.g., provide a time structure, extend social contact outside the family circle, have a regular activity, identity, social status, develop collectively and individually). Jahoda (1982) states that job loss results on the loss of these categories of experience, which in turn causes impaired psychological well-being.

The qualitative dimension “pertains to perceived threats of impaired quality in the employment relationship” (Hellgren et al., 1999, p. 182). In other words, it implies perceptions of potential loss of valued job characteristics such as deterioration of working conditions, demotion, lack of career opportunities, decreasing salary development and concerns about future person-organization fit (e.g., “There is a risk of losing my job autonomy” in Hellgren et al., 1999). According to Sverke and colleagues (2004) an individual may also perceive qualitative job insecurity if some job aspects were promised when entering the company but remained unfulfilled.

Job insecurity research and measures have focused mostly on the quantitative dimension (e.g., Feather & Rauter, 2004; Sverke et al., 2004; Mohr, 2000; De Witte, 1999). This is not surprising as Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) hypothesize that threats regarding the loss of valued job features are less severe because the employee still keeps his or her organizational membership. In fact, Hellgren and colleagues (1999) demonstrate in a longitudinal study that quantitative job insecurity is the most important dimension; it negatively affected subsequent well-being after controlling for mood dispositions and previous well-being measures. Moreover, Probst (2003) criticizes Ashford and colleagues’s (1989) job insecurity measure which differentiates loss of job features and loss of employment, arguing that the research of Roskies and Louis-Guerin (1990) shows that it is difficult for workers to make a conceptual distinction between both dimensions. Therefore, following the dominant discourse in job insecurity research and earlier findings, we focus upon quantitative job insecurity.

*Conclusions: Our job insecurity concept*

In this section we have seen an overview of the conceptual debate and different choices we made in order to arrive to our job insecurity definition. Some of the most important dimensions of our definition might be appreciated in the following figure:



*Figure 2.* Our job insecurity definition: Path of conceptual choices.

We focus upon a subjective perspective, the internal labour market, and a multidimensional approach which considers the quantitative, cognitive and affective aspects of job insecurity. Thus, we define job insecurity as the **employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job.**

## 2. EMPLOYABILITY

### 2.1. Dominant conceptual perspectives in Latin-America, United States and Europe

#### *Latin-American and Peruvian approaches vis-à-vis employability*

In Latin-America and Peru, the term employability has mainly been understood as the skills and competences needed for performing a job or creating self-employment. In this sense, employability is part of the policies to reduce the considerably high poverty levels. The goal of these interventions is to increase vulnerable groups' chances of having a decent and productive job. In this context, interventions take place in the form of training programs and especially in the case of Peru, have been strongly focused on youngsters or micro-entrepreneurs. The training programs addressed to youngsters have the objective of developing the competences needed to perform a specific job in companies of the formal sector. This implies a tight collaboration with enterprises in order to assess which are their main job requests. The training programs are tailored to these needs. In addition, studies about future trends on the labour demand are also taken into account (e.g., Chacaltana, 2004). For instance, the Peruvian Ministry of Labour and Promotion of the Employment has a program called Projoven specialized in developing the competencies of youngsters from 16 to 24 years old (<http://www.projoven.gob.pe/>). It lasts six months. During the first three months, the youngsters learn a craft. During the last three months, they are trained on the job, that is, on a company, industry or atelier.

Most of the programs addressed to micro-entrepreneurs comprise workshops which provide knowledge and managerial skills needed to start or run their own businesses (e.g., in Peru we can find the program ISUN, initiate your own business, which is directed by ILO). The long term objective of most of these interventions is to insert micro-entrepreneurs' businesses into the formal sector of the economy. We can also find programs addressed to vulnerable groups such as women, which provide them with the skills needed to develop a craft and become micro-entrepreneurs. (e.g., Work Training Program from PROCAL addressed to Bolivian women who were mothers or head of the household and were between 17 to 24 years old). In addition, there exist few attempts to establish strategies for the development in the formal education system of those competencies required to be a successful micro-entrepreneur (e.g., a proposal elaborated by Villarán in 2001 for the Ministry of Education). To sum up, in Latin-America, employability is a competence-based concept which has been developed at a policy level. Interventions in this regard have been strongly focused on vulnerable groups especially on youngsters. These efforts also include micro-entrepreneurs because this group's promotion is seen as a means to create more jobs in the

Latin-American context. Taking the exposed into consideration it might be said that employability has been mainly associated to labour market entrance. It is just lately that due to the economic crisis programs have been addressed to those recently unemployed or self-employed who have suffered a decrease in their incomes. For instance, the “Revalora Peru” program from the Peruvian Ministry of Labour and Promotion of the Employment (<http://www.revaloraperu.gob.pe/index.php>). Through this program, participants may receive courses and training programs paid by the State. In addition, they can access to work offers with the help of the Ministry.

As regards to the field of psychology, employability remains as well associated with the competencies needed in order to achieve labour market entrance. It might be said that research on employability is still in an initial stage and that there is still a lack of a clear definition of the phenomenon. For instance, Enríquez and Rentería (2007) define it as an “alternative to explain all that allows individuals to enter or remain in the labour market” (Enríquez & Rentería, 2007, pp. 91). Thus, efforts are concentrated in understanding this phenomenon and its most important components. In doing so, research focuses on the strategies to get a job. The focus is upon students finishing their studies (e.g., Marín, Martins & de Lara, 2004 in Brazil; Rentería & Andrade, 2007 in Colombia) or recent graduated professionals (Enríquez & Rentería, 2007 in Colombia). For instance, Marín, Martins and de Lara (2004) and Rentería and Andrade (2007) focused on students’ representations and actions on employability. These students were on their last year of university. These studies used a questionnaire and content analysis technique in order to interpret the data. While Marín, Martins and de Lara (2004) found that students lacked a clear definition of employability, Rentería and Andrade (2007) found that students related the concept with having the knowledge and abilities to get a job and considered the actions of creating a network and gaining work experience before graduation as fundamental for employability. In the effort of understanding employability Rentería and Andrade (2007) criticize a tendency towards “individualization” which is described as a trend towards setting all the responsibility of getting a job on the individual. The authors state that there is a need for understanding the role that social actors have in favoring the employability of individuals.

#### *The dominant US approach*

The United States Department of Labour has defined employability as the individual’s ability for finding and retaining a job (Eberts, 2002). Although retaining a job is mentioned, the focus of interventions is placed on getting a job and in particular on labour market

entrance. US policies have focused on easing the transition to the workplace of unemployed and vulnerable groups such as youngsters. For instance, programs such as Work First assist wealth-fare beneficiaries in finding a job. As regards to the youngsters, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) Resources for Youth, and the Employment and Training Administration provide for training opportunities as well as job placement help.

There have been efforts to generate statistical models for establishing an employability score. This has been done for instance for the Program Work First. The score was based on objective indicators such as level of education, prior employment, years of experience and tenure. Thus, in reality rather than referring to ability what has been measured was the individual's likelihood of finding a job.

It is important to highlight that the transition from school to the workplace occupies a very important place in the US context. This is seen more clearly in the education system which puts emphasis on career planning as a means to enhance employability. More specifically the US Department of Education is interested in the effect that secondary vocational education might have on what they call employability skills.

As regards to the field of psychology, the dominant US approach to employability is represented by Fugate and colleagues (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004). Their employability concept has been built up in the career development framework. In fact, Fugate and colleagues (2004) advance their model on employability taking into consideration the changes in the labour market especially in the employee-employer relation. Before these changes, the bounded career in the context of a paternalistic employer-employee contract was dominant. Thus, the lines of career building were set up for the employee. Nowadays, there has been a major change as it is more likely for an individual to have multiple employers during his or her career span. This increases career mobility. Fugate and colleagues (2004) mention the 'uprising' of new career models such as protean or boundary-less careers in which the individual rather than the organization is the manager. Therefore, in this view, it is the individual who takes all the responsibility for his or her own career development. In addition, Fugate and colleagues (2004) highlight the need for coping with a labour market which changes so quickly. Moreover, this coping should not be reactive but the individual has to be proactive in the management of his or her career, which again underlines the agency perspective and career self-management. Thus, in order to develop a successful career and remain employed, the individual has to be proactive. Accordingly, this perspective defines employability as "a form of work specific active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realize career opportunities" (Fugate et al., 2004, p. 16). In line with this

definition, Fugate and colleagues (2004) describe employability as a dispositional and multidimensional concept. An individual's employability is theorized to arise from the combination of the three following dimensions:

1. Career identity: this might be the most important of the components as it is the one which directs and gives energy to the whole employability: it is so to speak the motivational component. It refers to "how people define themselves in a particular work context" (Fugate et al., 2004, p. 20). A difference with other role identity concepts such as occupational identity is that it is characterized as giving sense to an individual's past, present (experiences) and future career (aspirations). For this reason it is described as longitudinal. It is a component of a cognitive-affective nature.

2. Personal adaptability: this refers to the ability to adapt to changing situations and so to speak it may be described as the action component. This component is related to optimism, propensity to learn, openness, internal locus of control and generalized self-efficacy which are individual characteristics that would indicate a proactive disposition.

3. Social and human capital: this component is associated to identifying career opportunities. It is stated that career progression will be influenced by an individual's human capital (e.g., investment in education) and social capital (i.e., networking).

Later on, Fugate and Kinicki (2008) elaborate more extensively on employability as a latent multidimensional construct by developing their Dispositional Measure of Employability (DME). Through this measure, the authors re-organize the three initial components into the following five:

1. Openness to changes at work: workers who are open to change have a favorable view of changes, as challenges rather than as threats. Thus, these individuals are more adaptable to changes in the workplace. A sample item reads: "I feel changes at work generally have positive implications".

2. Work and career resilience: this refers to the workers being optimistic about life and their competences. The workers see experiences as opportunities to learn which will help them to pursue more persistently their career goals. A sample item is "I take a positive attitude towards my work".

3. Work and career proactivity: this concerns an active disposition to collect information from the environment with the aim of identifying career opportunities. A typical item is "I stay abreast of developments in my company".

4. Career motivation: this relates to the concepts of motivation control (Kanfer & Heggestad, 1997) and learning goal orientation (Dweck & Legget, 1988). It relates more

specifically to setting up goals (including learning and training opportunities); a process which will keep the individual motivated. A sample item is “I have a specific plan for achieving my career goals”.

5. Work identity: it refers to a worker’s self-definition in his or her career context. It is an element that regulates and sustains behavior. As a consequence of their agency based approach, Fugate and Kinicki (2008) view the work identity dimension as a compensation for the lack of structural boundaries in today’s labour market. A sample item from their measure is “I define myself by the work that I do”.

It might be said that in this later version, the authors keep emphasizing the personal adaptability dimension. This component is framed in the workplace as openness to change, optimism and proactive identification of career opportunities. The initial career identity dimension is reframed as work identity and in some extent as career motivation.

In all, US policy vis-à-vis employability puts emphasis on job search and skills development which includes as well career planning. These topics share the aim of increasing an individual’s likelihood of getting a job. Strategies are addressed to the unemployed and vulnerable groups. Thus, it might be said that as in the case of Latin-America, a policy employability approach is also related to labour market entrance. As regards to the psychology field, the dominant US approach to employability is a dispositional one. It is interesting to notice that this outlook goes hand in hand with the US labour market context. Therefore, this approach is framed under career theories which heavily focus on the individual’s decision making process while underestimating the influence of structural factors (Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009). In comparison to the US policy approach, two main differences might be indicated. Firstly, the psychological approach goes beyond the unemployed or vulnerable groups centering the attention on the employed. Thus, employability is no longer limited to labour market entrance but considers job to job transitions. Secondly, it tries to respond to the limitations of objective employability measures which characterize the policy perspective (e.g., prior employment) although not completely successful as we will see further on.

### *The main European perspectives*

In Europe, the topic of employability has been widely discussed at a policy level (Berntson et al., 2006a). According to the European agency for Safety and Health at work (2002), three factors are critical to employability: first, the individual’s formation and competencies (e.g., VDAB - flemish work agency from the government provides training to



gain applicant skills; VDAB has special training focussed upon the long-term unemployed), second, strategies in enterprises regarding technological developments and the organisation of work and third, the policies of governments and social partners. However, how this should be achieved varies across countries as there seems not to be a single and uniformed European strategy to approach employability nor the groups that are prioritized in this concern. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2001), has tried to organize these efforts into four big groups: (1) major prevention programmes including specific groups at risk (e.g., maintaining work ability in Finland) , (2) rehabilitation of ill workers (e.g., global assistance programme for ill physicians in Spain, or a company agreement to promote the employment of disabled workers-SNCF in France), (3) reintegration initiatives for longer term disabled workers (Enabling people with disabilities to compete in the labour market-Access to work in the UK), and (4) workplace health promotion (e.g., Health at work in the National Health Service-HAWNHS in the UK). Perhaps one of the most recent trends concerns employability as part of a “flexicurity”-strategy. Flexicurity advances the idea of achieving equilibrium between the need for flexibility and security of employers and employees (Report of Employment security and employability: A contribution to the flexicurity debate; European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2008). Employability is advanced as a critical element in establishing this equilibrium: indeed, employable workers are flexible, since they easily find new jobs, and they find security in the many labour market opportunities they have access to.

As regards to research, employability has been studied from different perspectives and disciplines (e.g., economics, management, education and psychology), all having employment as a common outcome. This explains the presence of numerous definitions which vary in their emphasis on the individual, the organization or context (i.e., internal and external labour market). Thus, it is not surprising that employability has been described as a complex mosaic, without a consensus about its definition or measurement (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). For the interest of the present dissertation we will focus on the psychology field. Nonetheless, it is important to first acknowledge the contribution of the work on employability by Forrier and Sels (2003a), who come from the economic field, management in particular. Although they have a process approach to employability and measured it in objective terms of career success such as pay and promotion, they had a large influence on the psychological tradition, especially on the self-perceived perspective (see below for a discussion). Their main contribution was that they organized the existing literature and defined employability as the chances of getting a job in the internal or the external labour market. In addition, their work

set the bases to clarify which variables studied in the field might be considered as part of the employability concept, as its antecedents or consequences.

Concerning employability psychological research, three dominant perspectives may be distinguished: Competence-based with leading author Beatrice Van der Heijden (Maastricht School of Management, The Netherlands), Activity-based with leading author Karen Van Dam (Tilburg University, The Netherlands), and Self-perceived employability whose main representatives are Andrew Rothwell and John Arnold (Centre for Studies in Higher Education-Coventry University and Loughborough University, United Kingdom), Erik Berntson, Katharina Näswall and Magnus Sverke (Stockholm University, Sweden) and Nele De Cuyper and Hans De Witte (University of Leuven, Belgium).

#### *a. Competence-based perspective*

Authors in the competence-based view define employability as “the continuously fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences” (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2005, p. 143). Taking as a starting point a resource management view, competences are described as the individuals’ knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours which altogether allow the employees to achieve a high performance at work, and thus, contribute to maintain the organization’s success. Thus, the aim of employability in the competence-based approach should be to unify the individual capabilities with the organizational core competencies. In other words, employability is beneficial for both career and organizational outcomes. For the organization, employability leads to a sustained competitive advantage at the firm level. Therefore, it is important to invest in the development of human capital and workers’ competences. For the individual, employability leads to objective and subjective career success. Although the authors aim at providing resource management with a balance between organizational requirements and employees’ career development, the competence-based view puts much emphasis on the individual’s responsibility. In so doing, it falls in the tradition of the boundaryless careers. This implies that their employability conceptualization might address highly educated employees or white collar workers, as these employees might have more chances to self-manage their career development. Thus, it is not by chance that when validating their measurement they restricted their sample to employees with at least middle educational levels. This will be more clear after taking a look at the operationalization of this perspectives employability concept.

The competence-based employability is described as having the following five dimensions (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006):

1. Occupational expertise: it refers to the individuals' self-recognition of their high degree of professional knowledge and skills in their field of work. A sample item of this dimension is "I consider myself competent to engage in depth, specialist discussion in my job domain".
2. Anticipation and optimization: it refers to the individual's proactive adaptation to the workplace by the anticipation of future changes. It implies labour market knowledge and management of one's own career development. Sample items are "I take responsibility for maintaining my labour market value" and "I am focused on continuously developing myself".
3. Personal flexibility: as the previous dimension it refers to adaptability, only that in this case it is a reactive one. It implies adapting to labour market changes which one does not choose for. A sample item is "I adapt to developments within the organization".
4. Corporate sense: it refers to identification with the organizational goals and collaborating with other organizational members to achieve them. Thus, it implies social skills and networking. A sample item is "I am involved in achieving my organization's/department's mission".
5. Balance: this concerns achieving equilibrium between the interests of employees and employers. A sample item is "My work efforts are in proportion to what I get back in return (e.g., through primary and secondary conditions of employment, pleasure in work)".

The occupational expertise dimension is the only occupational specific, while the other four are classified as generic or general competences. This differentiation is a consequence of the strong focus on boundaryless careers which may extend to occupational transitions. In this sense, the competence-based operationalization of employability is based on the premise that in the boundaryless career environment, specific occupational expertise is not sufficient to have a positive work outcome, and thus, generic competencies are also needed.

Also the formulation of the occupational expertise dimension shows that competency based employability addresses highly educated individuals. These dimensions refer to experts in the field who can take decisions about the way in which they organize and perform their jobs (high autonomy). This dimension is oriented towards the specific job.

Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) acknowledge that their conception of employability receives two main influences of other employability definitions: the dispositional approach of Fugate and colleagues (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate et al., 2004) and the one of Van Dam (2004), which they claim to be more organizational focused. These influences can be seen in the generic dimensions of employability. Anticipation and

optimization, as well as personal flexibility are related to the dispositional approach of Fugate and colleges, where the key word is adaptation. These two dimensions are not only job specific but consider career development. Adaptation is referred to as willingness to adapt, thus, in our conceptualization it might be seen as an antecedent of employability rather than as its dimension. The corporate sense and the balance dimensions are acknowledged by the authors to come from Van Dam (2004) influences. These highlight the interaction between the individual and his/her organization.

The competence-based employability implies an assessment of the individual in the present and on the past but there is no reference to the future. Something interesting about this measure is that there are two measures being taken. One rate is given by the same employee and the other is given by the immediate supervisors. They say that research proves that individuals are more accurate when they know that supervisors are rating them: this is generally referred to as the leniency effect suppression (acknowledge bias from supervisors).

#### **b. Activity based perspective**

This is the perspective of Van Dam (2004) which is a process approach. Her model considers two concepts labelled as employability: “employability orientation” and “employability activities”. Employability orientation refers to the workers’ attitudes towards personal development and especially organizational interventions to enhance their employability. Thus, contrary to what we have seen before and although this perspective considers the individual, its focus is on the organization; namely to provide the organization with tools or necessary information to manage their human resources in order to enhance the firm’s flexibility. These efforts may take the shape of interventions and changes which aim to enhance the company’s flexibility. As in the case of the competence-based approach by Van der Heijden, this approach is also a managerial one. Employability orientation is related to attitudes towards change in the workplace. The main presumption is that those with employability orientation will have a positive attitude towards organization’s interventions to enhance their employability. It relates to the internal labour market. Mostly it is the organization which triggers the situation to which the individual has to adapt. Some sample items are “If the organization needs me to perform different tasks, I am prepared to change my work activities” and “I find it important to develop myself in a broad sense, so I will be able to perform different task activities or jobs within the organization”.

In this perspective employability orientation is seen as an antecedent of employability activities. The concept of employability activities relates to the activities in which the

employees participate to improve their employability (e.g., training programs). Thus, this employability approach is more focused on the individual and not in the relation between the individual and the organization as was employability orientation. In this sense, employability is seen as an activity-based concept. The measure is not about specific (and objective training activities) but more about competence development activities and career management. While in employability orientation the organization takes a leading role as creating changes, it is in employability activities that the individual takes the responsibility. It also refers to present and past evaluation, no mention about the future. Some sample items are “I am actively trying to develop my knowledge and work experiences” and “I do a lot to manage my career”. In sum, while employability orientation would be the attitude, employability activities puts the emphasis on a behaviour, this according to the author.

### c. Self-perceived employability

The self-perceived perspective is interested in the flexibility that employees need to achieve favourable labour outcomes. This tradition is focused on the individual, rather than on organizational or governmental policies, specifically, on individual's perceived chances of getting a job, thus, it might be characterized as a truly subjective approach. Employability is seen as a resource for career management or to cope with the changing labour market. “Employability is not a static characteristic of individuals but takes on a time- and place-related character that depend on the personal and labour context” (Forrier & Sels, 2003a, p. 107).

The measurements of perceived employability were initially global. It is not until recently that the concept has been seen as multidimensional (e.g., Rothwell & Arnold, 2007; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010). One of the pioneers of this perspective is Berntson and colleagues. Berntson's employability concept evolved from the job insecurity literature. He defined employability as “the individual's perception of his or her possibility to achieve a new job”. His measure had, depending on the publication, one or more items similar to: “How easy would it be for you to acquire new and comparable employment without moving?” (Berntson, Sverke, & Näswall, 2010; Berntson, Näswall, & Sverke, 2008; Berntson et al., 2006). One of the particularities of Bernston's approach is that initially there is not a clear differentiation between the external and the internal labour market when measuring employability.

Afterwards, other representatives of this perspective developed multidimensional approaches like Andrew Rothwell and John Arnold (2007). Precisely they add up to the development of this approach by finding empirical support for the internal vs external

dimension of employability. These authors developed a self-perceived employability scale and defined employability as the “ability to keep the job that one has or to get the job one desires” (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007, p. 25). Thus, they not only concentrate on gaining a job as Berntson defines employability but they also consider keeping the job. So it might be argued that their definition puts emphasis in employability as the new job security. Another contribution of Rothwell and Arnold (2007) is that they theorized on an additional dimension of employability, valued personal and occupational attributes, although empirical support is still needed for these dimensions. Taking into account the internal vs. external labour market dimension and the personal vs. occupational attributes dimension, they theorized on four different types (or quadrants) of employability:

1. Self-valuation in current organisation. Sample item: “ I have good prospects in this organisation because my employer values my personal contribution”
2. Perceived value of occupation in current organisation. Sample item: “among the people who do the same job as me, I am well respected in this organisation”
3. Self-valuation outside current organisation. Sample item: “I could easily retrain to make myself more employable elsewhere”
4. Perceived value of occupation outside current organisation. Sample item: “If I needed to, I could easily get another job like mine in a similar organisation”.

Later on, De Cuyper and De Witte (2010, in press) developed even further the dimensional approach to self-perceived employability. They defined employability as the “worker’s perception of available job opportunities, either with the current employer (i.e., on the internal labour market; internal perceived employability) or with another employer (i.e., on the external labour market)” (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010, p. 2). They developed a measure of perceived employability which not only included an internal vs. external dimension, but which differentiated also a quantitative from a qualitative dimension. Quantitative employability refers to getting another job, while qualitative employability refers to getting a job which is perceived as better. A better job refers to, for example, improved work conditions in comparison to the present one. In other words, qualitative employability does not have to be necessarily a promotion. Taking into account these dimensions, they established four types of perceived employability which concern the perceived probabilities of getting another job or a better one in the internal or the external labour market. These dimensions are the following:

1. Internal quantitative: another job in the same organization (with the same employer). Sample item “I am optimistic that I could find another job with this employer, if I looked for one”.
2. Internal qualitative: a better job in the same organization. Sample item “I am optimistic that I could find a better job with this employer, if I looked for one”.
3. External quantitative: another job in another organization (with another employer). Sample item “I am optimistic that I could find another job elsewhere, if I looked for one”.
4. External qualitative: a better job in another organization. Sample item “I am optimistic that I could find a better job elsewhere, if I looked for one”.

The instrument for the measurement of these dimensions was established by extending the employability global measurement of De Witte (1992). The empirical findings of De Cuyper and De Witte (2008) provided support for the existence of these four employability dimensions.

It is noteworthy that there exists as well a long tradition regarding school to work transition. Thus, it is important to be aware that there also exist measures for students' perceived employability (e.g., Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell, 2008). While we acknowledge the existence of these measures, we focus upon employability among workers.

To sum up, the various employability policy strategies in Europe include not only the unemployed and vulnerable groups like in Latin-America and the States, but focus as well on the employed. More interestingly, there is a concern for prevention and health promotion that results in that employability transcends its significance as labour market entrance (something not seen in the other two contexts). A topic that may result as particularly relevant for our research is flexicurity and the fact that the self-perceived employability considers the interaction between the individual and the labour market, something for instance which was neglected in the US context and by the other European approaches.

### *Conclusions: A comparison between the dominant perspectives*

In this section we will discuss the similarities and differences between the different perspectives on employability. To contribute with this comparison, we have included a summary table of research in the United States and Europe where employability has been further developed. This summary table may be found in the next page.

Table 2. *Employability: Dominant Research Perspectives in the United States and Europe.*

|                 | US  | Europe  |  |  |
|-----------------|---|---|--|--|
| Approach        | Dispositional   | Competence  | Activity   | Perceived  |
| Leading authors | Fugate & Kinicki (2008)   | Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden (2005)   | Van Dam (2004)   | Berntson et. al. (2008),<br>Rothwell & Arnold (2007), De Cuyper & De Witte (2010)                  |
| Focus           | Agency perspective<br>New career models   | Highly educated<br>Boundary-less careers  | Managerial   | Employees  |
| Aim             | React proactively to change   | Unify individual capabilities with the organizational core competencies   | Attitudes towards organisational interventions and personal development  | Alternative to job insecurity  |
| Measures        | 5 dimensions:<br>Openness to changes at work<br>Work and career resilience<br>Work and career proactivity<br>Career motivation<br>Work identity | 5 dimensions<br>Occupational expertise<br>Anticipation and optimization<br>Personal flexibility<br>Corporate sense<br>Balance | Employability orientation<br>Employability activities  | Global<br>Multidimensional (Internal vs External; personal-occupational; quantitative-qualitative) |
| Sample item (s) | “I feel changes at work generally have positive implications”   | “I take responsibility for maintaining my labour market value”  | “If the organization needs me to perform different tasks, I am prepared to change my work activities” (EO)<br>“I am actively trying to develop my knowledge and work experiences” (EA) | “I am optimistic that I could find another job with this employer, if I looked for one”            |



The topic of employability has been approached at a policy level in Latin America, the United States and Europe. As regards to research regarding this issue, it has evolved in the US and in Europe, while it is still beginning in Latin America (at least in the psychological field). As we have seen it is difficult to arrive at a consensus regarding the concept and measurement of employability. We can distinguish four main traditions which approach employability in different ways. These four main traditions are dispositional employability (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Fugate et al., 2004), competence-based (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2005), activity or processed based employability (Van Dam, 2004), and perceived employability (Berntson et al., 2006a; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010).

The interest of these four perspectives begun with the changes in the employer-employee relationships that took place after the economic turmoil of the 1980's. As a consequence, the work problem went beyond the unemployed and vulnerable groups and affected also the employed. Thus, the four perspectives focus mainly though not exclusively on the employed. However, there are certain differences concerning their focus of interest. Due to the strong influence of the boundaryless career framework on the dispositional and competence based approaches, they put the responsibility on the individual for developing their own career paths. As a result of this emphasis on self-management, these perspectives tend to address the highly educated. In contrast, the activity based approach and perceived employability have a broader approach and address all employees regardless of the occupational position or educational level.

Although the four perspectives on employability may seemingly have different aims and definitions, they share a common general purpose. This purpose is to increase the workers' chances to retain the present job or to gain a new one. Employability measures might be classified into two broad classes that focus on different aspects related to this purpose. The first type focuses upon the attributes which may increase the *chances* for retaining a job or getting a new one such as the measurements developed in the dispositional, competence-based and activity approaches. A second type of measure, such as the one carried out by the perceived employability approach focuses on the *outcome* associated with this chance. It is noteworthy that this last approached is also shared by economic perspectives such as those which equal employability with objective career success. Another characteristic of the employability measurements is that the four perspectives have developed multidimensional measures though some one-dimensional measures exist.

## 2.2. Our approach to employability: Perceived employability

This section presents the ongoing conceptual debate regarding the nature and the measures of employability. Our aim is to explain the choices upon which our employability definition has been built.

*Focus: the employee vs. the unemployed, vulnerable group, highly educated workers*

Employability research and policies address four main groups: the unemployed, vulnerable groups, the employed, and highly educated and specialized workers. This variety of groups is partly due to the historic evolution of its definition and aims. The employability concept began to be used around 1955 (Versloot, Glaude, & Thijssen, 1998 in Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006). During the 1950's employability was used as an equivalent for full employment (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). It distinguished employable (i.e., able and willing to work) from unemployable (i.e., unable to work) individuals. This conception was framed under the governmental efforts to increase the labour force supply in order to meet the demands of a growing industry. Thus, the focus was on the unemployed aiming at their incorporation to the labour force. Later on, in the 1960's and 1970's, arised an interest for vulnerable groups such as the physical or mentally impaired and socially disadvantaged groups. Efforts focused on the existing differences between their current work abilities and the ones required for meeting job demands (Mc Quaid & Lindsay, 2005). In fact, the field of the unemployed and vulnerable groups in the employability domain is "quite widespread and has been thoroughly discussed on policy levels" (Berntson et al., 2006a, p. 224). It might be argued that the focus upon these two groups implied that employability was namely related to opportunities for labour market entrance (Berntson et al., 2006a). In line with this aim, employability was associated with variables such as attitudes (e.g., towards work and self-image), knowledge and skills (Forrier & Sels, 2003a).

During the 1980's, a major transformation of the labour market took place. To remain competitive, organizations underwent mergers, downsizing and increased significantly their number of temporary contracts. Functional flexibility of the staff became a strategy to manage their number of employees according to the demands of a fluctuating and competitive environment. In this context, employability means gaining functional flexibility of the staff (Forrier & Sels, 2003) and the interest was set upon the less flexible workers. An important change is that employability is seen from a managerial view, as a human resource strategy. Until then, governmental policies played a major role as they aimed the unemployed and the

vulnerable groups. It is worth to notice that the main actor is the company rather than the individual.

During the 1990's, the new organizational practices brought more tangible consequences for the individuals. The increase of temporary contracts as well as the changing labour market, affected the employer-employee relationship. For employees, it became more difficult to have "lifetime employment", that is, to remain employed in the same company through all their working life. As a result, the focus was shifted upon all workers. "It is not only important to stimulate entry into the labour market" (Forrier & Sels, 2003a, p. 104) as in the case of the unemployed or vulnerable groups, "but also to ensure career possibilities within and beyond the borders of organizations" (Forrier & Sels, 2003a, p. 104). In line with this, there are four main changes regarding employability. Firstly, all workers become as well a target group, going beyond the unemployed and the vulnerable groups. Secondly, the workers become responsible for taking care of their own employment, not the government, nor their employers. Thirdly, employability is presented as the alternative to job insecurity. Finally, employability is re-defined as the individuals' ability to maintain themselves employed in the internal or the external labour market.

Another employability approach was extended to a specific group, the highly educated workers. This recent trend is framed under the agency perspective which includes concepts such as boundaryless and protean careers. The main premise is that individuals are responsible for building up their own careers which cross organizational boundaries as they desire to. In this view, the individual must have the competences and resources to acquire career mobility. Thus, having the agency perspective as framework, it is understandable that employability research in this domain focuses on highly qualified individuals who chose to build up their own career across organizational boundaries. This approach has received criticism as it fails to consider: (1) structural constraints (e.g., labour market segmentation), (2) the interplay between agency and structural factors necessary for transitions, (3) differentiate between desirability to move and ease of movement, and (4) labour markets which, in contrast to the US, have a stronger institutional context (Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009).

In this dissertation we will focus upon all workers following one of the latest trends in employability research. This perspective considers the flexibility that employees have to develop in the current labour market. In doing so, it encompasses the interplay between the workers and their context. We do not choose the agency perspective (i.e., focus upon highly educated workers) as it is argued that this approach is less applicable to Europe (Forrier, Sels,

& Stynen, 2009) and most probably to a country to Peru as well. Agency perspective concentrates on highly educated employees whereas in Peru people who have initiated a university education sum up to 19.8% of the population according to the last census, and it is not for sure that they will finish these studies (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática - INEI, 2008).

*Focus: input vs. output based measures*

Employability measures can be classified as input or output based. Input measures focus upon factors that increase the chances of sustainable employment. These factors are: dispositions including social and human capital (e.g., Fugate & Kinicki, 2008), competences (e.g., Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006) and activities (Van Dam, 2004). The input measures might be attractive for human resource management and practitioners, as they can provide prevention guidelines or help in setting goals in order to increase an individual's employability. While such prevention-focus has many merits there are some problems associated with input-based measures. Firstly, it is difficult to provide a complete list of all the aspects that increase the chances for sustainable employment. Secondly, the proposed input factors may be argued to be antecedents of employability rather than aspects of the concept itself. For instance, the employability activities scale of Van Dam (2004) might refer to willingness to develop competencies (e.g., "I am actively trying to develop my knowledge and work experiences") rather than the actual perceived ease of transition. Finally, input measures are mostly individual-centered and put less emphasis on the context. They are built upon the presumption that taking part on activities to enhance their movement capital regardless of the context. Nevertheless, in times of economic crises, even high profiles may find it difficult to find good employment.

Output measures focus upon outcomes of the actual chance of retaining a job or getting a new one. These outcomes can be: perceptions of employment radius such as getting a job in the internal or in the external labour market (e.g., De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010). The output-based approach is the most common in the economy and management literature, focusing on outcomes that indicate an individual's labour market position such as employment vs. unemployment, temporary vs. permanent contract or salary level.

For the present dissertation, we were attracted to the output based measure for a number of reasons. In contrast with the input-approach, they do not mix up antecedents with the employability concept as such. In fact, empirical findings show that many of the input-based measures predict perceived employability (Wittekind, Raeder, & Grote, 2010; Berntson et al.,

2006a). In addition, output measures account for individual factors and the context. The only disadvantage about output measures is that the designation of which outcomes might be more relevant for employability is still a subject of debate, especially as it comes to subjective or objective. This debate will be extended in our next section. For the moment, it is important to indicate that in this dissertation the focus is upon output based measures as they result much advantageous than an input-based approach.

*Focus: subjective vs. objective*

It is interesting to notice that although the employability concept began to be used around 1955, it was not until the 1990's when it became a hot topic and thus, the number of studies in the field increased significantly (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006; Forrier & Sels, 2003a). This development was a consequence of the growing interest to establish the nature and measure of the concept in view of the new employer-employee relationship. Before the 90's most studies focused on unemployed or vulnerable groups, and the objective perspective was the dominant one. It was oriented towards the employer's demands or requirements of a sector. This perspective was translated to the individual level of responsibility and to a person's chances of a job or career, specifically on indicators of objective career success. Objective measures included such indicators as the number of transitions and formal characteristics of the job like wage, position in the company, tenure, type of contract and educational level (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). These "hard" indicators were easy to register. However, they also present some limitations. According to Berntson, Sverke and Marklund (2006), the sense of being employable is more relevant than actually getting a job or not. In fact, we could argue that an objective perspective limits itself to the use of labour market indicators which assess the effects of employability rather than employability itself. This implies that these measures might indicate contextual factors rather than individual ones. In addition, objective indicators of employability such as education, occupational position or number of previous jobs may be criticized because, the same measure can be used as an antecedent or as a consequence (Forrier & Sels, 2003a; De Cuyper et al., 2008).

By way of contrast, the subjective approach focuses on the individuals' experience in their labour market. De Cuyper and colleagues (2008) mention that subjective measures of employability can trace their origins on March and Simon's (1958) perceived ease of movement, i.e., "individual perception of the available alternatives in the internal and/or external labour market" (Forrier & Sels, 2003a, p. 111). The subjective approach overcomes the disadvantages of the objective measures. Firstly, it captures the sense of being employable

(Berntson et al., 2006a). Thus, it puts forward the individual as participating and being responsible for his or her own employment. By putting the focus on the individual it aligns with the new employee-employer relationship, and also with a psychological perspective. Secondly, it allows capturing the interplay between the individual and contextual factors. Although the focus is on the individual, employee's perception may consider the relation between the individual's characteristics and the labour context (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Thus, it might be argued that a subjective approach reflects the nature of employability better which "is not a static characteristic of individuals but takes on a time and place-related character that depends on the personal and labour market context" (Forrier & Sels, 2003a, p. 107). Finally, it allows centering on the concept itself rather than on its antecedents or consequences such as pay or position. Considering the explained reasons, and taking into consideration the most recent advances in the field (e.g. Berntson et al., 2006a, Wittekind, 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008), this dissertation focuses on a subjective approach to employability. This is included in our definition by taking into account the employee's perceived ability and his or her interplay with the external labour market. In addition, the subjective approach aligns to our view on the job insecurity concept.

It is noteworthy that both the job insecurity and the employability literature include objective and subjective approaches. Unlike in job insecurity research, the objective approach is still a dominant one in employability. This might be the case due to the evolution of the employability concept and its aims. While job insecurity studies initiated with the employed, the employability field had a long tradition in various groups yet without much responsibility on their own employment agency, and it is not until lately that the aim has turned to all workers. Thus, it is not until recently that a subjective approach in employability has been gaining more interest from researchers.

Other point to be aware of is that the subjective-objective debate also applies for input-based measures. For example, an input objective measure could be based on the employer/sector demands or requisites for a given job (this is an indicator that is used mostly in the unemployed and vulnerable groups literature). The logic behind would be that if someone fulfills these requisites then he or she will be more employable. In addition, there could be a subjective approach to it, such as the extent to which an individual is willing to engage in activities to enhance his or her employability. Nevertheless, as mentioned before, we will focus upon the output-based measure in particular, largely because it fails to distinguish antecedents from the actual employability concept.

*Focus: dimensions of perceived employability*

In order to define even more our employability concept we will now take a look at the main dimensions of perceived employability:

1. Internal vs. external labour market: The evolution of the employability concept originated from two main trends regarding transitions: labour market entrance which considers the unemployed and disadvantaged groups (e.g., Bynner & Parsons, 2002; De Fruyt & Mervielde, 1999), and “job to job” transitions, or the employed (e.g., Forrier & Sels, 2003a). The “job to job” trend considers transitions into the internal and/or external labour market place. The new labour market allows employees to pursue career possibilities beyond the limits of the company where they work. This means that a new job can be gained in the internal labour market (e.g., receiving a promotion) or in the external labour market (being employed by another company). In fact, some researchers define Employability as “an individual’s chance of a job in the internal and/or external labour market” (Forrier & Sels, 2003, p. 106). In this dissertation, we will focus on the external labour market because it reflects the flexible and boundaryless nature of employability, and it is the most frequently used in research. Thus, external employability might allow for comparison with other studies.

2. Gaining vs. keeping: Although all definitions of employability consider transition as their core concept, in other words gaining a job, many definitions concerning the working population also refer to keeping a job. For example, Romaniuk and Snart (2000, p. 319) state that employability is “determining, attaining, and maintaining the skills needed to work, marketing oneself in order to obtain work, and working competently in order to retain work”. This is because employability is viewed by some researchers as a way of safeguarding job security (e.g., Forrier & Sels, 2003a), but perhaps more correct would be to consider employability as a form of *employment* rather than *job* security. Employment security implies the possibilities of transitions, or the possibility of gaining new employment when needed. Therefore, we will focus on gaining a job. In this way we follow the path of researchers such as Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004) who point to the adaptive and proactive nature of employability, stating that “although employability does not assure actual employment, we contend that it enhances an individual’s likelihood of gaining employment” (Fugate et al., 2004, p. 16).

3. Same quality conditions or better ones: Forrier and Sels (2003a) mention in their employability review that some authors not only consider if the individual gets a job, but also its quality. Therefore, we could also state a quantitative and a qualitative dimension for employability. The quantitative dimension refers to gaining a job, while the qualitative one

refers to gaining a job with specific features. The present dissertation will focus on the quantitative dimension of employability. This will allow us to develop a definition of employability in parallel with the one of job insecurity. In this way, we may establish the relationship between both concepts.

In the literature employability has been defined as first a one-dimensional and lately as a multidimensional concept. The first approach to perceived employability conceived it as one-dimensional. The main representative been Berntson and colleagues defining it as “an individual’s perception of his or her possibilities to achieve a new job” (Berntson et al., 2006a, p. 225). It refers to the perceived chances of getting a job but for instance there is no clear differentiation between an internal or external labour market. Thus, this one-dimensional view might be classified as well as a global approach to the concept. As mentioned before, later on, other authors extend the study of perceived employability and state it as a multidimensional. Two good examples of this are Rothwell and Arnold (2007), and De Cuyper and De Witte (2010). Rothwell and Arnold (2007) find empirical support for an internal vs. external dimension. They theorized regarding a second dimension personal vs. occupational, although more studies need to be made to support it. De Cuyper and De Witte (2010) find as well empirical support for the internal vs. external dimensions of employability, thus, supporting Rothwell and Arnold’s finding (2007). They contribute by adding a dimension: quantitative vs. qualitative. Their findings showed good factor solution, good predictive validity as well as the relevance of distinguishing the proposed dimensions. To sum up, in this dissertation we chose for an external quantitative employability. This approach fits in with most of the earlier research and follows the tradition of Berntson and colleagues (Berntson et al., 2006a). It is chosen as it allows accomplishing our aim of making a comparison with job insecurity.

#### *Focus: employability vs. self-efficacy*

One of the concepts which arises controversy regarding employability is self-efficacy and the similarities that might lie between them. In the literature, self-efficacy has also been used as an indicator of an individual’s ability to find a job (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). In the career field, self-efficacy has been defined as the individuals’ belief that they are capable of performing the behaviours needed to obtain a desired employment outcome (Moynihan, Roehling, LePine & Boswell, 2003). As a result, self-efficacy has been portrayed as part of the employability phenomenon or at least related to it (Berntson et al., 2008; Forrier & Sels,



2003a). The need for a clear distinction becomes even more crucial when a subjective approach is taken on employability.

Some conceptual distinctions may be established between both concepts. Firstly, their approach to the behaviour of achieving a job is different. Self-efficacy and its variants focus on a course of action that is already taking place in order to achieve a goal. This course of action involves the orchestration and continuous regulation of multiple sub-skills for achieving a goal. This course of action takes into account the initiation and regulation of transactions with the environment (Bandura, 1982). In contrast, employability does not consider the actual search behaviour and does not focus on a process, but focuses on the employee's perceived ability of gaining a job: it is related to a hypothetical situation.

Still conceptual comparisons are not sufficient. That is why Berntson and colleagues (2008) studied this issue empirically. Their findings show that employability and self-efficacy (i.e., “beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”, Bandura, 1997, p. 3) are different constructs; perceiving oneself as employable is different from the general feeling of being able to solve problems (Berntson et al., 2008; Berntson, Sverke, Näswall & Hellgren, 2006). Moreover, they found the relation between both constructs: employability may positively affect an individual's general efficacy beliefs.

*Conclusions: Our employability concept*

In this section we have seen an overview of the different perspectives on employability. Some of the most important dimensions of employability might be appreciated in the following figure as well as the choices made in this dissertation:

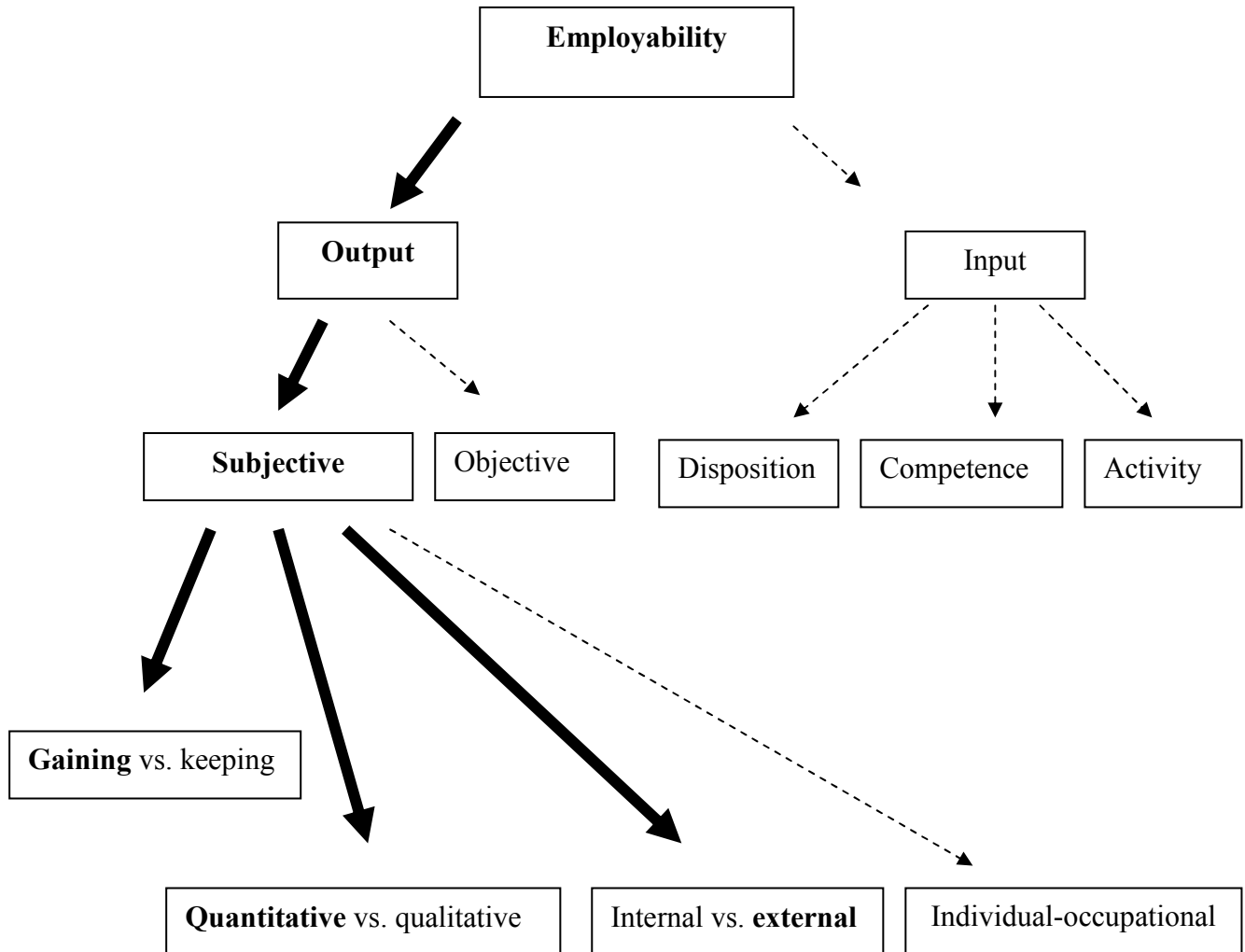
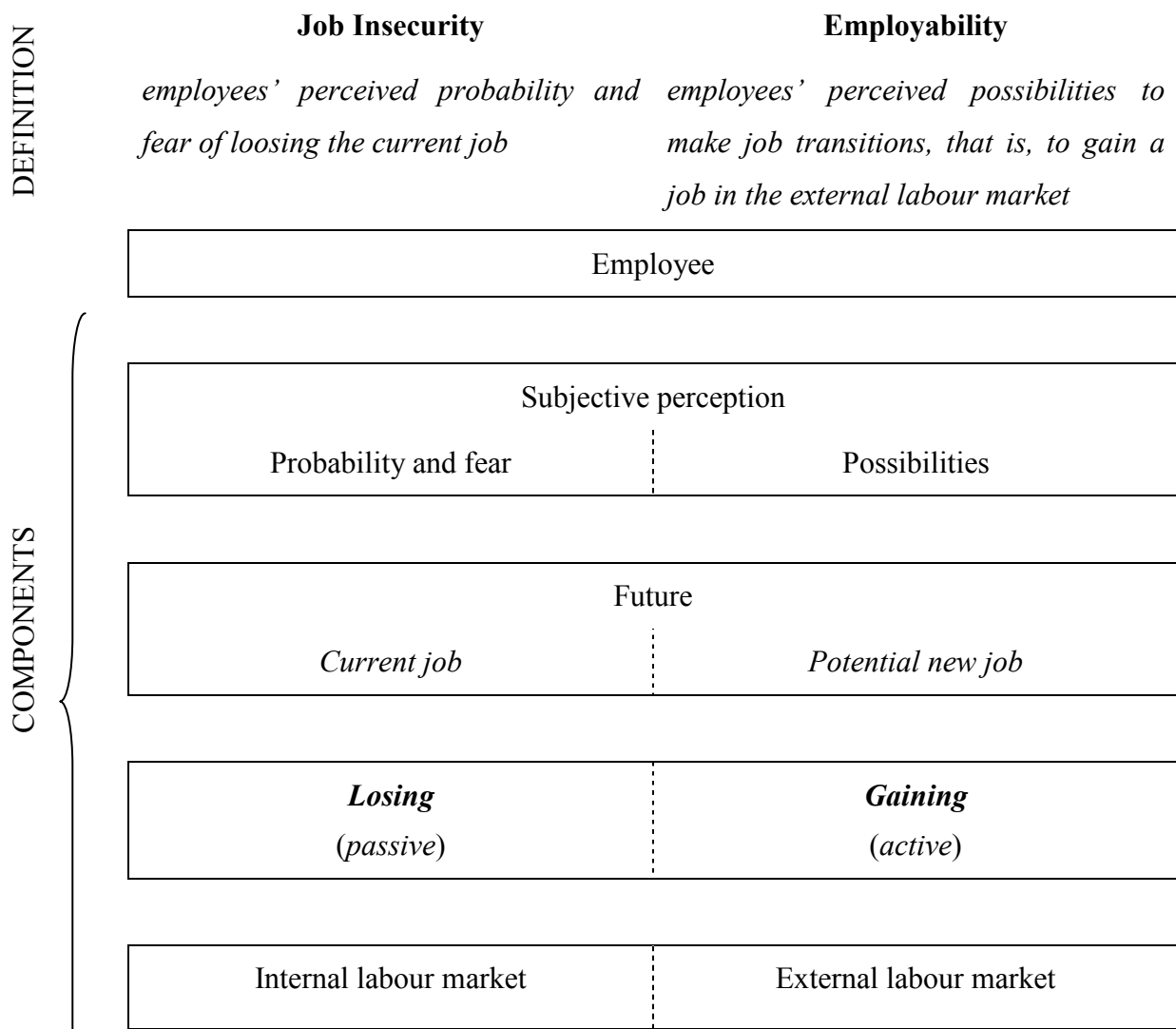


Figure 3. Our employability definition: Path of conceptual choices.

We focus upon output, subjective, external-quantitative aspects of employability. Thus, we define employability as the **employees' perceived possibilities of gaining a job in the external labour market.**

### 3. CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

We feel confident that our previous discussion on our choices to define our job insecurity and employability definitions may be of help. In the following, we discuss the similarities and differences between our concepts (see *Figure 4*).



*Figure 4.* Definition and components of job insecurity and employability.

A first similarity is that both concepts arise from a European perspective and have developed in accordance to the new labour market context, that is, a context where the individual also plays a more participative and important role in taking decisions about the own career development. This would also explain why both concepts focus on the individual.

In fact, both constructs emphasize the employee. A second similarity is that our job insecurity and employability constructs focus on the employee and the future existence of his or her job; both constructs look towards the future; however, job insecurity concentrates on the continuance of the *present* job, while employability focuses on a *potential* job (Wittekind et al., 2010; De Cuyper et al., 2008). Moreover, it might be stated that both constructs in looking towards the future also look into the output of a situation. The third similarity is that our two constructs are subjective perceptions. Furthermore, they relate to the individuals' appraisal of the situation. In that sense, they intend to catch the interplay between the labour market and the individual. This means that although our approach is subjective and focused on the individual, we acknowledge the relevance of the labour market. A fourth similarity is that it might be stated that both share a cognitive dimension to assess the actual level of job insecurity or employability. This is reflected by the use of the terms *probability* and *possibilities*. Finally, our both definitions might be considered as quantitative, focusing on a job and not on job characteristics.

As regards to differences, one obvious distinction is that job insecurity relates to the employee's perception of his or her future inside the organization, while our employability definition considers the external labour market. Secondly, our job insecurity concept includes an affective component which is not present on the employability construct. Thirdly, we would like to highlight the use of the term losing and gaining. Furthermore, this is a difference that may help to explain the relationship between job insecurity and employability. The core element of job insecurity is *losing* the job, while the one for employability is making a transition or *gaining* a job. These *losing* and *gaining* elements are important because they may reflect the tone of the relation that each construct establishes with work related outcomes. The perceived possibility of losing the job is related to its involuntary nature and the uncertainty which are associated with the impossibility of the employee to take actions in order to face the situation (De Witte, 2005). As discussed earlier, the perceived possibility of losing relates with helplessness and lack of control. On the other hand, employability relates to gaining a job. In the literature, employability is considered advantageous for employees because it allows them to cope with "unpredictable, unstable and more flexible employment relations" (Berntson et al., 2006a, p. 224). Actually, psychological contract theory highlights the negative tone of job insecurity and the positive one of employability. According to this theory, job insecurity constitutes a violation of the old psychological contract (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006, 2007, 2008). On the other hand, employability is embedded in the new psychological contract (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008; De Cuyper, Notelaers, & De Witte,

2009) and it has many advantages for the employee like for example the management of his own career (Rousseau, 1995). Furthermore, the literature frequently mentions employability as an important resource to cope with job insecurity and buffer its negative effects. In this respect, De Cuyper and colleagues (2008) distinguish two possible approaches: moderation and mediation. According to the authors, the moderation or buffering approach states that when faced with job insecurity, employees with higher employability will experience less negative consequences than those with lower employability. On the other hand, the mediation approach suggests that high-employable workers will perceive less job insecurity than low-employable workers.

The losing and gaining elements will mark an important difference. In the case of job insecurity, it is a negative tone with respect to the assessed situation, while in the case of employability, it is a positive one. In fact, job insecurity is often conceived as a work stressor with detrimental consequences for the employee. On the other hand, some authors consider employability as advantageous for employees because it allows them to use all their capacities, to achieve self-realization (De Vries, Gründemann & Van Vuuren, 2001) and to gain flexibility in the labour market place (Berntson et al., 2006a). These elements may also reflect a different approach towards the nature of the worker's behaviour, Job insecurity frames the employee's behaviour as passive. The worker feels powerless when perceiving uncertainty about a negative, unpredictable and involuntary event (in this case, losing the job itself). Consequently, the worker is unable to take concrete actions in front of a situation which arises in him or her perceived job loss and feelings of insecurity. On the other hand, employability portrays the worker's behavior as active. In fact, the employability concept is commonly associated with the idea that the employee is able to adapt proactively to the new labour context (Fugate et al., 2004). This adaptation takes place thanks to the worker's ability of gaining a new job. Although our construct considers the employee's perceived possibilities, it is still oriented towards action because it measures what the individual is capable of doing. Thus, job insecurity is a stressor, while employability might be seen as a resource (Silla et al., 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008). In this sense, job insecure employees might see themselves as passive in front of the labour market situation, while employable workers might perceive themselves as active. This might suggest a negative relationship between job insecurity and employability as follows:

Job Insecurity relates negatively to employability,

As a final point of reflection we would like to acknowledge that the present comparison is based on the choices we made in building up our definitions. Thus, we are conscious we could have arrived to a different comparison if we would have taken other choices. In addition, we are aware that some choices regarding the employability concept were made taking in consideration a previous job insecurity definition in order to allow comparison.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY: RELEVANCE FOR THE CONTEXT OF METROPOLITAN LIMA**

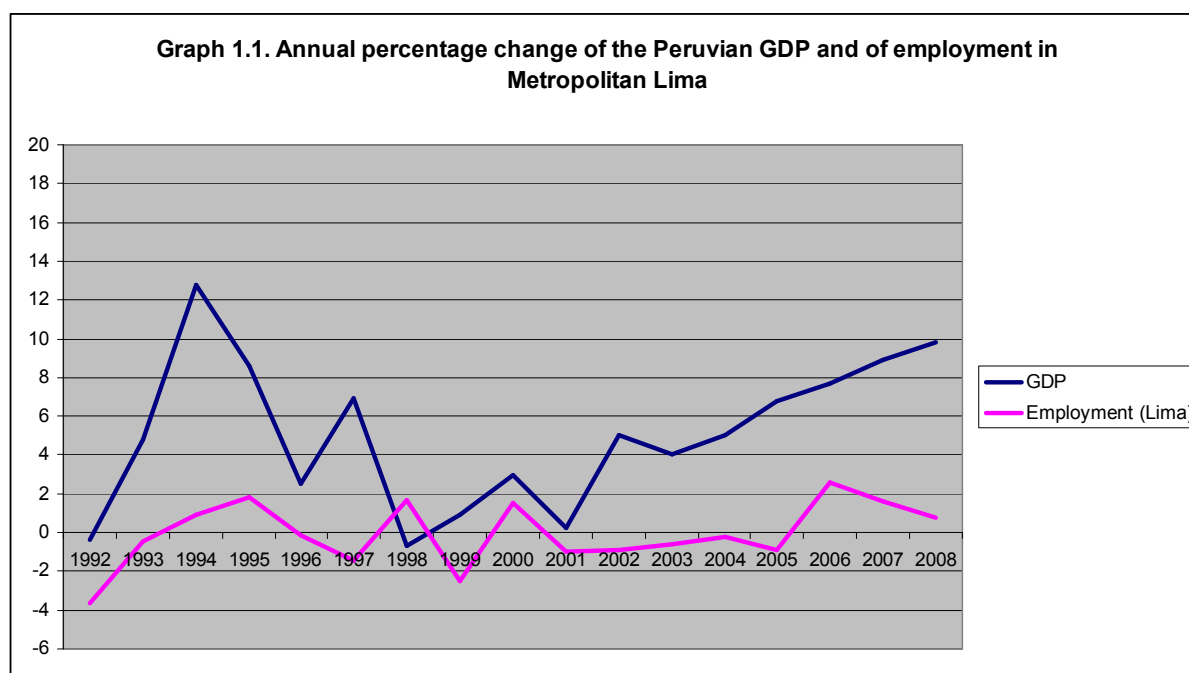
In the previous chapter, we developed conceptually our job insecurity and employability definitions. We also outlined our interest in building up an initial bridge towards the Latin-American context. In this way we could strengthen the test of our concepts. In line with this purpose, we intend to highlight characteristics of the Labour Market of Metropolitan Lima which might indicate the presence and relevance of job insecurity and employability. Thus, it is not our aim to present an extensive and complete overview of the labour market, but to concentrate on some aspects of it which might indicate the presence of job insecurity and employability.

#### **1. EVOLUTION OF THE PERUVIAN ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT RATES OF METROPOLITAN LIMA**

Our research was applied while Peru experienced a cycle of sustained and important economic growth which begun back in 1990 (INEI, 2009, 2008; Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo - MTPE, 2008). By the end of June 2008, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered a seven-year uninterrupted ascending trend while all the economic sectors showed a positive development (INEI, 2008). At that moment, Peru's economic growth was expected to continue due to the demand and high price of raw material as well as the existence of a strong internal market (International Monetary Fund - IMF, 2008, 2009; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - ECLAC, 2009; INEI, 2008). In line with this prosperity period, during 2008, two important international summits were held in Peru, more specifically in Lima: the V Summit between the Heads of State and Government of Latin America-Caribbean with the European Union (LAC-EU), and the XVI Summit of the Leaders of the Forum of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Thus, the Government designated 2008 as the "Year of the World Summits", largely publicizing their economic benefits for the population. It is noteworthy, that the V LAC-EU Summit highlighted the importance of creating decent and productive jobs as a means to free people from poverty.

It was not until October, 2008, that is, months after our application, that Peru's economic development showed signs of deceleration as a consequence of the global financial

crisis (INEI, 2009). As shown in Graph 1.1<sup>1</sup>, the period of national economic prosperity was accompanied by an increase in the employment rate of Metropolitan Lima. According to the Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo (MTPE), from 1990 to 2007, while the GDP experienced a significant annual growth of 4,5%, the employment rate of Metropolitan Lima also increased at an average rate of 1,06% per year (MTPE, 2007). These figures are of particular relevance if we take into consideration that nearly a third of the Peruvian population lives in Metropolitan Lima (30,9%, 8'472,935 inhabitants) (INEI, 2008).

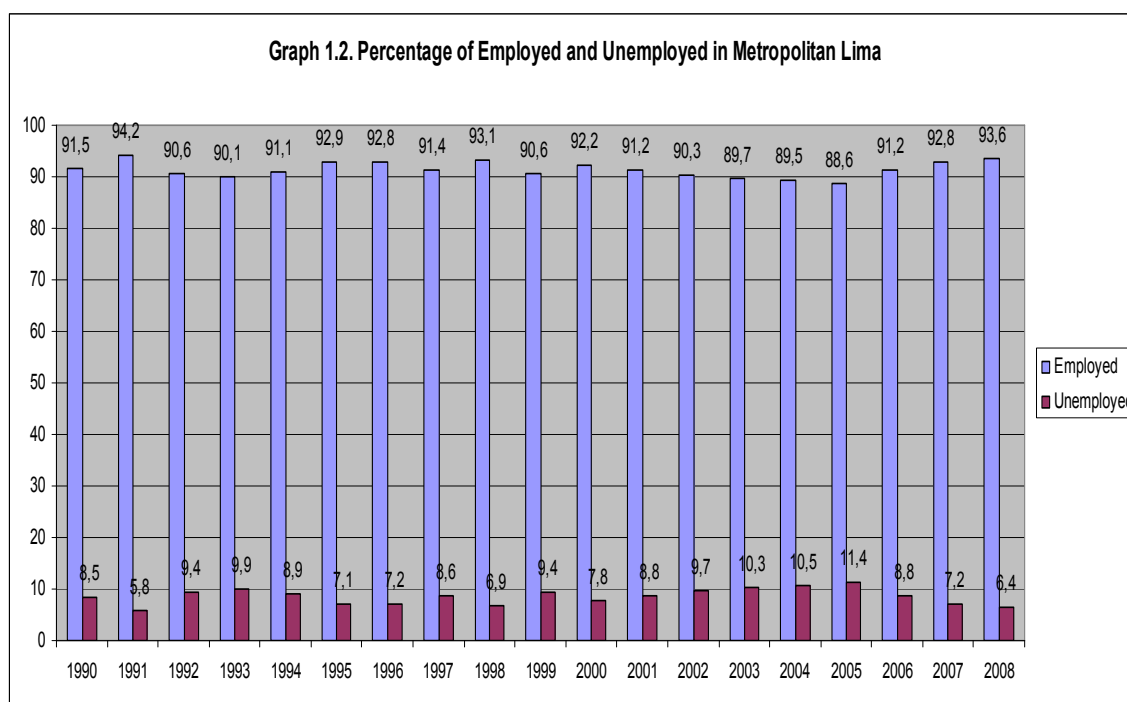


## 2. POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF THE PRESENCE OF JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY

Graph 1.2 (see next page) indicates that through the years the vast majority of the population of Metropolitan Lima who were able to work have been employed. Thus, it would also suggest that unemployment only affects, though substantial, a minority of the population.

<sup>1</sup> Graph 1.1. was elaborated upon the information upon the following sources: Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción Social, Encuesta de Nivel de Empleo, 1990 - 1995. Convenio MTPS - INEI, Encuesta Nacional de Hogares, III trimestre de 1996 - 2001., MTPE - DNPEFP, Encuesta de Hogares Especializada en Niveles de Empleo, Octubre 2002, julio 2003, agosto 2004, setiembre 2005, MTPE - DNPEFP, Encuesta de Hogares Especializada en Niveles de Empleo. Octubre 2006, setiembre 2007 y agosto-octubre 2008.





As indicated in Table 3 (see next page), the unemployment rates have kept low with the exception of 2003-2005. This table shows as well two periods during which unemployment rates underwent important declining trends: 1992-1998 and 2006-2008. Indeed, the year 2008 reported the lowest unemployment rate in a decade. This declining trend may be also observed when comparing the unemployed percentages during the trimester March-May from 2006 to 2008 (see Table 4 in the next page.). This is particularly interesting if we take into account that to describe as close as possible Metropolitan Lima's Labour Market during the time of our research application, we will use INEI's employment situation report for March-May 2008.

During this period, the vast majority of all the economic active population<sup>2</sup> is employed (91,9%), while only a minority is unemployed (8,1%) (See Table 4.). Nevertheless, these figures seem to contradict a general sense that the economic growth shown by the official statistics has not benefited the majority of the population nor their employment situation.

A survey carried out in Metropolitan Lima by the Grupo de Opinión Pública (GOP) of the Universidad de Lima on April 2008 (GOP, 2008) revealed interesting results. Almost a third of the respondents answered that the most important problem of Peru was unemployment (32,2%). The origin of these contrasting views might lie on the criteria used by the government for considering someone to be unemployed: those who did not work at least one hour per week although they have the disposition to do so. Thus, this could be a

<sup>2</sup> Refers to the population between 14 to 64 years old who has a job or is looking for one.

Table 3. *Unemployment Rates (%) in Metropolitan Lima from 1992 to 2007.*

| 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Jul  | Jul  | Jul  | Jul  | Jul  | Set  | Jul  | Aug  | Jul  | Jul  | Jul  | Jul  | Oct  | Jul  | Aug  | Sep  | Oct  | Sep  | Aug  |
| 8,3  | 6,0  | 9,4  | 9,9  | 8,8  | 7,1  | 7,2  | 8,6  | 6,9  | 9,4  | 7,8  | 8,8  | 9,7  | 10,3 | 10,5 | 11,4 | 8,8  | 7,2  | 6,4  |

Elaborated with information from the MTPE (2003, 2008)

Table 4. *Employment and Unemployment rates (%) during the trimester March-May from 2003 to 2008.*

|              | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Employment   | 90,2 | 90,0 | 89,9 | 91,2 | 91,5 | 91,9 |
| Unemployment | 9,8  | 10,0 | 10,1 | 8,8  | 8,5  | 8,1  |

Source: INEI (2008)

Table 5. *Adequate Employment, Visible and Invisible Underemployment Rates during the Trimester March-May from 2003 to 2008.*

| Type of employment        | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Adequate employment       | 34,3 | 34,1 | 34,4 | 35,4 | 39,5 | 42,9 |
| Visible underemployment   | 17,0 | 16,2 | 16,4 | 15,2 | 15,5 | 14,0 |
| Invisible underemployment | 38,9 | 39,7 | 39,1 | 40,5 | 36,4 | 34,9 |

Source: INEI (2008)

week and limited indicator of the unemployment reality. In this sense, it would be interesting to take a look at the conditions of the employed.

During March-May 2008, almost half of the employed (48,9%) were classified as underemployed, that is, without an adequate job. There are two different types of underemployment: (1) visible: those who work involuntary less than 35 hours per week, and 2) invisible: those who work more than 35 hours per week but receive less than the minimum wage (INEI, 2008). As observed in Table 5 (see page 58), 14% were visibly underemployed, while 34,9% were invisibly underemployed. These figures would show that a blurred line between employment and unemployment might be also present in the formal sector of the economy. This situation might be even more serious taking into consideration that, as it names suggests, invisible underemployment is difficult to be registered.

The study of job insecurity in this context might be of particular interest. Indeed, the before mentioned survey carried out by the Grupo de Opinión Pública (GOP) of the Universidad de Lima (GOP, 2008) on April, 2008 reveals interesting findings. Almost a third of the respondents answered that the most important problem of Peru is unemployment (32,2%), followed by corruption (27,5%) and poverty (27,5%). In addition, it showed that laboural instability is perceived as the second most important cause of unemployment (lack of investment is the first cause and deficient education the third one). Almost all respondents perceive there is few or none laboural stability (95,7%), while at the same time laboural stability is considered the most valued job characteristic (39,7%). In fact, 44,9% of the respondents replied that they were afraid of losing their jobs. These results indicate that the study of job insecurity might be of particular interest in this context.

This survey (GOP, 2008) and recent changes in the labour market would also suggest that employability might be a relevant variable to study in the context of Metropolitan Lima. As regards to the survey (GOP, 2008), the majority of the respondents would like to change their jobs (59,1%) and think that it will take more than three months to get it (50,4%). The most important reasons for changing of job were getting a better wage (59,1%) and laboural stability (24,7%). As regards to labour market trends, an important change was experienced between 1990 and 2007 as a result of a period of economic prosperity. This change concerned the type of occupations demanded by the labour market; the growth of the national production increased the need for qualified labour force such as professionals and technicians (MTPE, 2007). Thus, there was an increased participation of professionals and technicians (from 25,0% in 1990 to 28,9% in 2007), while the not qualified occupations decreased (from 36,0% to 29,6%) (MTPE, 2007). The same trend is reported from March to May 2008 (INEI, 2008);

there is an increase of the employed with higher education, university by 12,4% and non university by 7,2% as compared to the previous year. On the other hand, those with primary (by 6,5%) and secondary school (by 0,5%) decreased their participation. The demand for more educated employees is stronger in the public sector as well as in private companies with more than 10 employees (MTPE, 2007). Although the number of workers of organizations with more than 10 employees (37,8%) is small in comparison to the total employment (INEI, 2008), it must be considered that they are the ones with a higher demand for qualified labour force while most of the non-qualified jobs are auto-generated (MTPE, 2007). This would indicate that these organizations might have more difficulties in finding the adequate person for a job (MTPE, 2007). The perception of the respondents of the survey of GOP (GOP, 2008) would support this statement, indicating deficient education as the third most important cause for unemployment. Thus, employability might be a relevant factor specifically in the context of the organizations with more than 10 employees, where human capital and thus, education might play a very decisive role for getting a job. It might be interesting to add that workers from organizations with more than 10 employees are not exempt from low quality jobs (Galín, 1986) which might favour individuals' vulnerability to experience job insecurity. For instance, the vast majority of the workers of organizations with more than 10 employees (63,7%) work more than 40 hours per week, a tendency which has been reported to continue increasing (INEI, 2008).

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Awareness over the environment in which the research takes place is important moreover considering the nature of our main concepts, that is, job insecurity and employability, and their probable link to economic and labour market fluctuations. For instance, previous findings have shown that a higher level of employability might be perceived during prosperity periods than in times of economic recession (Berntson et al., 2006a). As concerns job insecurity, earlier research has demonstrated that perceived job insecurity levels vary according to organizational membership (Kinnunen et al., 1999). In fact, amongst the different levels of proposed predictors of job insecurity we can find organizational conditions (Kinnunen et al., 1999; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984) such as mergers or downsizing. Although these processes are confined to the internal labour market, their occurrence might derive from managerial decisions taken in view of a context that surpasses organizational boundaries such as the industry's, country's and even global economic situation. In this regard, it is also interesting to notice Mohr's (2000) definition of a

first job insecurity level. This has been described as a state of public awareness due to high national unemployment rates (Mohr, 2000), thus, relating labour market conditions to the incidence of job insecurity. From the above described, it may be stated that the macro environment (i.e., the economic national situation or labour market conditions) may be seen as objective conditions which are then transformed by means of perceptual processes into workers' interpretation of their own job insecurity (De Witte & Näswall, 2003; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984) and employability (Berntson et al., 2006a). Taking into consideration that at the time of our research application Peru's economy was experiencing a sustained growth, it might be the case that workers could be more prone to experience higher employability and less job insecurity than in a recession situation. The idea of experiencing a period of sustained economic prosperity was highly publicized by the Government at the time, after all two important Global Summits were held in Peru, and they were seen with optimism as a means to reinforce economic cooperation with other regions, to create more employment opportunities and to assure national development.

As we have seen two of the most important challenges faced in the Labour Market of Metropolitan Lima are underemployment which we have interpreted as a precarious employment position which might trigger perceived job insecurity, and the demand for qualified labour force which may influenced an individual's perceived employability. Moreover, workers employed in organizations with more than 10 employees might rise not only relevant for the study of job insecurity and employability, but as well a newly open avenue of occupational psychology in a group of workers who despite not been the majority still remain important and require better understanding. This is the case as most of the efforts of governmental institutions, non governmental organizations and inclusively private research have been concentrated on the informal sector (INEI, 2002) and on micro-entrepreneurs as means to favour employment creation for the majority of the Peruvian population. Nevertheless, organizations with more than 10 employees are the ones which require highly qualified labour force. In fact, in view of the existing gap between the offer and the demand for a qualified labour force, the Ministry of Work and Job Promotion has been developing diagnosis of job demands and future trends, along with training programs especially for youngsters (Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo, 2007). In this sense, job insecurity and employability are concepts that might be crucial for achieving an initial understanding of workers from organizations with more than 10 employees. After all, in this 'niche' one may find more competition between organizations to get the most qualified human resources which may influence an individual's employability, as well as probably a

larger presence of organizational changes such as mergers or downsizing which may trigger a worker's job insecurity. The characteristics of the workers of organisations of more than 10 employees are provided in detail in the Methodology Chapter (Part 2) along with a comparison with the characteristics of our sample.

**PART 2**

**METHODOLOGY**





## **PART 2**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Our research is a cross-sectional study with a convenience sample of 651 employees from 8 organizations of Metropolitan Lima. Based upon the subjective nature of job insecurity and employability (Part 1, Chapter 1) we considered four levels of antecedents: personality (e.g., core self-evaluations), the interplay of the employee with his or her family (e.g., family status), the interplay with the work environment (e.g., occupational position) and the perceived labour market (e.g., perceived number of unemployed, perceived number of employment opportunities). As regards to consequences, in line with Warr (1984), we focus upon work related well-being (e.g., job satisfaction, career satisfaction) and general well-being (e.g., life satisfaction). We controlled for age, gender and organizations. These variables and their relation to job insecurity and employability will be discussed later on (Part 3: Studies and Results).

The present section contains information regarding the research design, the procedure, the measurement instruments which we administered and the characteristics of our sample, that is, the organizations and individuals who participated in our study. This chapter also includes the results of the preliminary analyses we performed in order to test the validity (i.e., principal component analysis) and reliability (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) of our scales. Additionally, we present a correlation table of our scales and an overview of the analyses we conducted to examine our research questions.

#### **1. RESEARCH DESIGN: SOME GENERAL ISSUES**

Our research design was chosen bearing in mind that the focus of our study is the theoretical development of job insecurity and employability concepts, as well as the examination of their relationship. In addition, we considered the feasibility of the project and some practical restrictions (e.g., chances of sample attrition and the fact that we depended on the voluntary participation of the organizations and their employees).

We opted for a cross-sectional instead of a longitudinal study for three main reasons: (1) the nature of job insecurity and employability, (2) the scope of our research and (3) the fact that Peru is a new context for research in the field. The nature of our concepts implied that there was a severe risk of sample attrition among job insecure and employable workers. In the

subsequent applications, these employees might have left their organizations because either they lost their jobs or they got a new job in another organization. In addition, as cross-sectional design allows us to gain quick theoretical development it fitted better our aim of testing a research model of such a wide scope and to favour initial research in a non-European context like Peru.

We decided for a convenience instead of an ad-random stratified sample after deliberating on the best way to fulfil our study's main aim given the characteristics and constraints of the organizations where Peruvian employees work. For taking this decision, we considered the characteristics of the Labour Market of Metropolitan Lima which might indicate the presence and relevance of job insecurity and employability (Part 1, Chapter 2).

Convenience sampling was based on two criteria. The first criterium used for selecting organizations took into account the number of employees; in particular, we targeted big and medium sized organizations, without excluding neither public nor small organizations from the sample. As a way of contrast, micro organizations were excluded from the study. The Peruvian Ministry of Labour and Promotion of the Employment (2000) states that big or medium organizations have 50 or more employees, small have 10 to 49, while micro consist of less than 10 workers. This size classification, usually used for categorizing the private sector, was important for the purposes of the study. In fact, because of their characteristics (e.g., the existence of long-term development plans and the fact that the vast majority of employees are not members of the same family) big and medium organizations offered an organizational context where job insecurity and employability arose as particularly relevant (Part 1, Chapter 2). In addition, the participation of employees from big and medium organizations presented a pragmatic advantage because it allowed us to collect a large number of questionnaires in a single application.

Given that public and the small organizations present an organizational context where job insecurity and employability might be relevant, we took a second decision; although we centered our efforts in targeting mainly big and medium organizations, we did not exclude small or public organizations from our sample. In contrast, we excluded micro organizations from the study due to the fact that their characteristics might not favour the research's aim. For instance, micro organizations tend to lack a long term development plan and their workforce consists predominantly of family members (MIMDES, 2007). Furthermore, most of them do not receive a wage (MIMDES, 2007). As a result of its characteristics and size, it was considered that the nature of our concepts might be different in a micro organization. It is noteworthy that we took this decision taking into consideration that we regard this research as

an initial bridge towards the Latinamerican context (Part 1, Chapter 1). Thus, we chose for a feasible way to gain quick theoretical development.

Another criterion for categorizing organizations relates to their economic activity. Accordingly, they can be classified into different economic sectors and industries such as the primary sector (e.g., mining), the secondary sector (e.g., manufacturing) and the tertiary sector (services). In line with this classification criterion we took another decision with respect to our targeted sample; we intended to include organizations from different economic sectors. Our purpose in doing so was to increase the heterogeneity, and hence the variability of our sample. It is noteworthy that heterogeneity was achieved not only by including organizations from different industries but also by allowing the participation of employees from small and public organizations.

We opted for a convenience sample acknowledging its limitations with respect to the results' generalization (see Part 3, Chapter 2: Limitations and strengths). Hence, our study was designed to examine the relationship amongst job insecurity and employability within a specific sample. Accordingly and in order to increase the validity of our findings, we paid specific attention to the following four issues. Firstly, we aimed for a large sample of at least 600 employees; a task that we accomplished. Secondly, we indicated the extent in which our sample differed from the Peruvian working population and more specifically from the one of big and medium organizations of Metropolitan Lima. We developed this point further on in the section of sample characteristics. Thirdly, when we performed regression analyses we controlled for the various organizations that were included in our sample. Finally, we actually analysed if the results from these organizations differed from each other. We applied these last two measures because we were aware that a certain disturbance might arise due to the heterogeneity of our sample.

To sum up, we opted for a cross-sectional study which used convenience sampling targeting mainly employees from big and medium organizations pertaining to different industries of Metropolitan Lima, without excluding employees from small or public organizations.

## **2. PROCEDURE**

Following the sampling criteria, a total of 19 organizations were approached through personal and professional contacts. Of these 19 organizations, 15 were big or medium, two public and two small. As regards to the private organizations, they belonged to different industries: mining, manufacturing and services. Some of the approached organizations

declined to participate for various reasons such as an unexpected downsizing process, undergoing negotiations with unions or disagreement between the management regarding the fact of exploring and reporting the working conditions of the employees. Finally, only eight organizations decided to thoroughly collaborate with the project. These organizations agreed to collaborate with our research as long as we kept the anonymity and the confidentiality of the reported data.

Each organization designated one or more representatives to help us with the application of our study (e.g., setting up application dates). Thus, we also approached the organizational representatives in view of gaining their commitment to support our research. Although we were glad with their support, we acknowledged in advance the risks that this collaboration could bring to our investigation. Therefore, as we mention further on, we took care of introducing preventing measures to reassure the employees about the confidentiality and anonymity of our study.

As regards to the actual application of our project, the organizational representatives distributed our questionnaires amongst all employees. In other words, no sampling was made by the organizations. Employees were told that their participation was voluntary and that they should take their questionnaires home to answer them. They were given a deadline for their return.

Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter. In this letter we explained our study's aims, made clear that the research was carried out as part of a project by the K.U.Leuven and assured the anonymity and confidentiality of the process. This letter also contained general instructions on how to answer the questionnaires. Besides, we included an e-mail address for sending any questions or comments directly to us, the researchers. In this way, we aimed to assure a direct communication without interference of the organizations.

Even though participants took their questionnaires home, it was expected that they completed them in 30 to 50 minutes; most white collar employees answered the questionnaires in about 30 minutes or less, while most blue collar workers took around 45 to 50 minutes. Once the participants had answered their questionnaires, they had to personally place them inside a sealed box. This box could be found at the entrance of each organizational building. Moreover, the employees were informed of the date when the researcher came to pick up the sealed box and that the researcher was the only person authorized to open it.

Afterwards, the collected data was inserted in a SPSS data set. Finally, in exchange for their collaboration, organizations received a report summarizing their results.

### **3. MEASURES**

We selected our measurement instruments taking into account their reported validity and reliability as well as the availability of Spanish validated measurements. Another criterion for selecting instruments was our aim to build up a questionnaire of reasonable length, this taking into consideration that our study was already wide in scope.

Most of our instruments have been previously used in the Psychological Contracting across Employment Situations Project (Psycones) which investigates temporary employment in different countries amongst them Spain (Rigotti, et al., 2003). In those cases where the original instruments were only available in English, we translated them into Spanish. Afterwards, in Lima, a Spanish speaking person who was also fluid in English, volunteered to translate these scales back into English (back-translation). We compared both the original and the back translated versions and we made some modifications in order to safeguard the semantic and syntactic equivalence of the instruments. Later on, in view of assuring that the wording was appropriate for the Peruvian context, we gave the whole questionnaire to 11 employees of a unit in a communication organization in Lima. We asked each one of these volunteers to fill out the questionnaires and to write down their comments and suggestions regarding the language used. Consequently, we made some further modifications in order to adapt the questionnaire to the Peruvian context.

A very important step in our methodology was to test the quality of our scales in our own sample. Most responses on our study were obtained using a Likert scale. Thus, prior to examining the quality of our scales and in the measurements that required it, we reverse coded those items which were negatively phrased. Then, in order to test the validity of our measures we performed principal components analyses. The majority of our scales revealed the expected dimensional structure showing a satisfactory validity. Afterwards, we constructed scales by adding the items comprised in the dimensions. Finally, we analyzed the reliability of our scales in terms of internal consistency, i.e., Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The coefficient alpha reliabilities for all our variables were satisfactory, ranging from .70 to .93 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

In this section, we present our measurement instruments for: (1) job insecurity and employability, (2) their antecedents, (3) consequences and (4) control variables. Unless stated otherwise, the variables of our study were measured using the Psycones Project Spanish validated instruments (Rigotti et al., 2003). Alongside our measures, we mention the results of our preliminary analyses. If available, previous validity and reliability measures for the scales are indicated.

### 3.1. Job insecurity and employability

#### *Job insecurity*

We defined job insecurity as the employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job (Part 1, Chapter 1). Thus, the instrument had to assess its subjective nature, the cognitive and affective components, and focus on the loss of one's job (quantitative) rather than in the deterioration of working conditions (qualitative).

In accordance to our exposed criteria, we assessed job insecurity using a six-item scale. This scale consisted of the four-item Spanish validated version of De Witte's Job Insecurity Scale (2000), with sample items such as "I feel insecure about the future of my job" and "I think I might lose my job in the near future" and two items from the Job Insecurity Scale developed by Sverke, Hellgren, Näswall, Chirumbolo, De Witte and Goslinga (2004), i.e., "I am afraid I will get fired" and "I worry about keeping my job", which we previously translated from English into Spanish.

We added the two items of the Scale of Sverke and colleagues (2004) with the aim of maintaining a balance between the number of items corresponding to the cognitive and the affective component. This decision was taken in line with Borg and Elizur (1992) who considered that to assess job insecurity it was necessary to include both components. After all, as Sverke and colleagues (2004) stated, the relation between these two dimensions is what originates the level of job insecurity.

We also took into consideration the validity and reliability of the original instruments. When applied in Spain, De Witte's Job Insecurity Scale (2000) showed a good fit for one factor and a satisfactory reliability of .79 (Isakson et al., 2006). As regards to the job insecurity 5-item scale of Sverke and colleagues (2004), it was applied in Belgium, Italy, The Netherlands and Sweden. Analyses indicated that the items loaded on one factor and that the scale showed a satisfactory reliability with an alpha ranging from .76 to .90 (Sverke et al., 2004).

As regards to our six-item job insecurity measure and just like in the original instruments, respondents had to indicate their agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

To investigate whether the six items loaded on one factor, they were subjected to principal component analysis. As expected they all loaded on one factor. However, the reversed item "I am sure I can keep my job" which loaded .26 was dropped. By doing so the internal consistency reliability increased from .70 to .73. Regarding the remaining five items, after dropping the above mentioned item, they presented a range of loadings from .43 to .85.

As a result, our job insecurity scale presented a mean of 2.36 and a standard deviation of .81 (See Appendix A). These results would indicate that most participants were not insecure with respect to their jobs.

### *Employability*

We defined employability as the employee's perceived possibilities to make job transitions, that is, to get a job in the external labour market (Part 1, Chapter 1). To measure this variable we used a sub-scale of the employability instrument of De Cuyper and De Witte (2008a, 2008b), which had been adapted from De Witte's Employability Scale (1992). We translated the 4-item sub-scale from Dutch to English and then to Spanish. Our scale comprised sample items such as "I am confident that I could quickly gain another job with another employer" and "I could easily switch to another employer, if I wanted to". Respondents had to indicate their agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

An earlier application of the scale in Belgium, showed its satisfactory validity and reliability with item loading range from .86 to .90, and an alpha of .94 (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008a; 2008b). As regards to our study, our preliminary results were also satisfactory showing one factor with item loading range from .80 to .87 and a reliability of .86 ( $M = 3.25$ ;  $SD = .83$ ). These results indicated the accuracy of our instrument in order to measure employability. Besides, we could conclude that most participants perceived that they were able to get another job in another organization (Appendix B).

## **3.2. Antecedents**

In the present section, we report the instruments used to measure our four groups of antecedents (i.e., personality, the interplay of the employee with his or her family, the interplay with the work environment and the perceived labour market) and the correspondent preliminary analyses.

### *Personality: Core self-evaluations*

Core self-evaluations (CSE) has been defined as a broad personality trait which is the source of (mainly) four specific traits: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, internal locus of control and low neuroticism or emotional stability. CSE has also been named in literature as "positive self-concept" or "positive self-evaluations". In this regard, scholars stated that CSE may vary from a positive to a negative self-appraisal (Judge, Bono, Erez, & Locke, 2005).

Therefore, an individual with positive self-concepts is someone “who is well adjusted, positive, self-confident, efficacious and believes in his or her own agency” (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003, p. 304). In contrast, an individual with negative self-concepts will consider himself or herself as incompetent to cope with life’s exigencies and will have a negative view of life events (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

To measure personality we used the Core Self-evaluation Scale (CSES) of Judge, Erez, Bobo and Thoresen (2003), which we translated from English into Spanish. It comprised 12 items such as “There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me (r)” and “I am confident I get the success I deserve in life”. Respondents indicated their agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Judge and colleagues (2003) reported that the 12 items of the CSES displayed a unitary factor structure with an average alpha of .84 (all samples above .80). Thus, we chose the CSES because of its satisfactory validity and reliability. Additionally, this scale is a short personality measure which helped to increase the feasibility of applying our already wide-scope research.

In our study, we subjected the 12 items of the CSES to principal component analysis and as expected, all the items loaded on one factor. This factor explained 31.02% of the total variance. As regards to reliability, the scale showed a satisfactory alpha of .79 ( $M=3.84$ ;  $SD=.50$ ). Results indicated that most participants tend to evaluate themselves as able to cope with life’s exigencies and to have a positive view of live events (See Appendix C).

### *The interplay of the employee with his or her family*

These antecedents were measured using the Psycones Project Spanish validated instruments (Rigotti et al., 2003). As regards to their results, we indicate them further on in the sample characteristics section.

#### *a. Family status*

For assessing this variable we used the living conditions measurement of the Psycones Project (Rigotti et al., 2003). It consisted of a single item asking “Do you live with...?”. In accordance to this item, respondents had to indicate whether they lived (1) together with their partner or spouse, (2) together with family, parents or friends, or (3) alone. The advantages of using this measure were twofold. Firstly, we applied a previously validated instrument. Secondly, it allowed us to recode the initial response categories into an antecedent which is frequently used in both job insecurity and employability research, that is, family or marital



status. Therefore, we re-coded family status into a dummy variable (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting).

b. Financial contribution to the household

We asked the participants to indicate the degree to which they contributed with the household-income: sole earner (100%), main earner (more than 50%), joint earner (about 50%) or contributory earner (less than 50%). Consequently, we re-coded financial contribution to the household as a dummy variable, that is, 0 = sole or main earner (more than 50%) and 1 = contributory earner (50% or less).

c. Number of dependents

This variable referred to the number of persons that was largely dependent on the respondent's income. We included it as an indicator of an individual's responsibility to provide for the family. We decided to take into account the characteristics of the Peruvian society, in which extended family may still play an important role. Hence, we considered that number of dependents might be more relevant in the Peruvian context than other indicators related to providing for the family such as number of children and all its variations (e.g., number of underage children or number of children living at home).

Number of dependents was assessed by a single item asking participants to write down the number of persons, excluding themselves, that depended on their income. Accordingly, we measured number of dependents as a continuous variable.

*The interplay of the employee with the work environment*

a. Level of education

The Psycones Project measured this variable by a single item asking "Which is your level of education?" (Rigotti et al., 2003). Aiming for a more accurate measure we decided to ask for the higher level of education completed by the participant. We established the answering options taking into consideration the Peruvian educational context, the distinction made by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INEI) and the characteristics of our targeted sample. Therefore, respondents had to choose one of the following alternatives: primary school, secondary school, technical studies, university studies, post-graduate studies or other. The option 'other' was accompanied by a blank space in which the participant had to write down his or her answer. This was considered useful because we did not want to lose this information in case the individual was unsure about his/her answer. In the few cases were

participants filled out this last option, we reclassified their answers into one of the previous five categories. It is noteworthy, that the categories ‘post-graduate studies’ and ‘other’ were included as a result of the suggestions made by some of the 11 volunteers who previously checked the wording of the questionnaire.

In order to favour both the analyses concerning this variable and a clear presentation of our results, we decided to re-code level of education as a dummy variable (0 = low educational level; 1= high educational level). This meant that low educational level comprises non-higher education (i.e., primary school and high school) while high educational level includes higher education (i.e., technical studies, university studies and post-graduate studies).

In those cases where we needed to perform a more refined analyses concerning educational level, we re-categorized our initial classification into three levels: low (i.e., primary and secondary school), medium (i.e., technical studies) and high (i.e., university and post-graduate studies). Consequently, when it was required we also re-coded level of education into two dummy variables with medium educational level as the reference group (i.e., ‘low educational level’: 0 = medium and high educational level; 1 = low educational level, and ‘high educational level’: 0 = low and medium educational level; 1 = high educational level).

We clearly indicated in the text the analyses where the more specific distinction was made. Therefore, it is noteworthy that unless stated otherwise, we measured level of education as a dummy variable (0 = low educational level; 1= high educational level).

#### b. Impression management

Impression management refers to the behaviours displayed by the workers to enhance their self-image (Bolino, 1999). To measure this variables we not only translated the instrument developed (i.e., Self enhancement motive scale) by Yun, Takeuchi and Liu (2007) from English to Spanish, but we also adapted it. We “contextualized” the scale to the relationship with the immediate supervisor.

After this adaptation, we used the six-item scale. Participants were asked “In my workplace I...” . It included sample items such as “I intend to change my behaviour to create a good impression on my boss” and “I like to present myself to my boss as being friendly and a polite person”. Responses were given in a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Yun, Takeuchi and Liu (2007) reported that the scale showed an alpha of .81. In our study, as we mentioned before, the five items of the scale loaded on one factor (range of

loadings: .68 to .78). The scale showed a satisfactory alpha of .89 ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=.80$ ). (see Appendix D).

c. Occupational position

Occupational position was measured by means of a single item. Stressing the fact that respondents should consider the level of the tasks they performed and not their level of education, they were asked to classify their current jobs in accordance to one of the following organizational levels: (1) unskilled blue collar workers, (2) skilled blue collar worker or foreman, (3) lower level white collar worker, (4) intermediate white collar worker or supervisor of white collar workers, (5) upper white collar worker, middle management / executive staff, or (6) manager or director. Each option was accompanied by some examples which we adapted to the Peruvian context. Due to the fact that our research application depended on the voluntary participation of the organizations, we did not know in advance which of them will finally agree to commit to our study. Therefore, we were constrained to keep our examples as general as possible.

Following earlier research for both job insecurity and employability, we re-coded occupational position as a dummy variable (0 = blue collar worker; 1 = white collar worker). As in the case of the educational level variable, when a more refined analyses regarding occupational position was required, the initial classification was re-categorized into three levels: blue collar worker (i.e., unskilled blue collar worker and skilled blue collar worker), white collar worker (i.e., lower level white collar worker and intermediate white collar worker or supervisor of white collar workers) and management (i.e., upper collar worker, middle management / executive staff and management or director). As a consequence, when needed, the occupational position was also re-coded into two dummy variables with white collar workers as the reference group (i.e., 'blue collar workers': 0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers, and 'managers': 0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers).

It has been clearly indicated in the text when the conducted analyses used the most specific distinction for occupational position. Therefore, it is important to highlight that unless stated otherwise, occupational position was measured as a dummy variable (0 = blue collar worker; 1 = white collar worker).

d. Type of contract

In our study, type of contract was measured by one single item asking respondents whether they had a temporary or a permanent contract. Participants had to choose one of these options. Accordingly, type of contract was dichotomized into 0 = temporary worker and 1 = permanent worker.

e. Weekly working hours

In our study, working hours was assessed by a single item asking respondents to write down the average number of hours that they worked per week. We measured this variable as continuous taking into account the characteristics of the labour market of Metropolitan Lima. In this regard, the May-June-July 2008 Employment Report of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics stated that 64.6% employees of Metropolitan Lima work more than 40 hours per week. In this context part and full-time employment may have different implications, therefore, as we mentioned before, we considered it more accurate to measure weekly working hours as a continuous variable.

f. Tenure

Tenure was assessed by a single item asking participants “How long have you been working in this organization?”. Respondents had to write down their answer filling out the space correspondent to years. If necessary, that is, if they had been working for less than one year, then they could fill out the spaces for months or days.

We initially transformed the answers given in years and months into days. Then, we transformed this data back into years. Thus, by means of the transformed data we constructed a variable for tenure using mean values for the years worked in an organization. As a result, tenure (i.e., average number of years of working in an organization) was measured as a continuous variable.

g. Without other job

Without other job was assessed by a single item asking participants if they had an additional job. Respondents had to choose between the options “yes” or “no”. This variable was dichotomized into 0 = yes and 1 = no.

*Perceived internal and external labour market*

The perceived labour market measures which were used, with the exception of perceived recent organizational changes, were adapted from the Psychones Project (Rigotti et al, 2003). The original Psychones measure was used to assess the organizational situation from the employer's perspective.

a. Perceived recent organizational changes

As was mentioned before, this is the only aspect of perceived labour market which was measured using an instrument different from the ones of the Psycones Project. The perceived recent organizational changes scale was adapted from the Organizational Change instrument developed by Baillien and De Witte (in press).

This variable was assessed by one single item asking participants if in the last six months, there had been any restructuring processes going on in their organizations. Respondents had to choose between two options "yes" or "no" This variable was dichotomized into 0 = no and 1 = yes. Results indicate that most participants did not perceived the presence of recent organizational changes ( $M=0.50$ ;  $SD=.50$ ).

b. Perceived changes in the number of employees

This variable was assessed using one single item which asked participants if they considered that during the last three years the number of employees in the organization had varied. Respondents had to choose between three options. For the purposes of the study, this variable was measured as ordinal, using the three alternatives of response in the coding, that is, 1 = yes, the number of employees has decreased, 2 = no, there have not been significant changes, and 3 = yes, it has increased. Results show that most participants perceived that the number of employees in their organizations had increased ( $M=2.51$ ;  $SD=.74$ ).

c. Perceived changes in the number of unemployed

This variable was assessed using one single item which asked participants if they considered that during the last three years the number of unemployed had varied in Peru. Respondents had to choose between three options. This variable was measured as ordinal. Therefore, the three options of response were used in the coding, that is, 1 = yes, the number of unemployed has decreased, 2 = no, there have not been significant changes, and 3 = yes, it has increased. Results indicate that most participants perceived that there we no significant changes regarding the number of unemployed in Peru ( $M=2.09$ ;  $SD=.91$ ).

#### d. Perceived changes in the number of employment opportunities

This variable was assessed using one single item which asked participants if they considered that during the last three years the number of employment opportunities had varied in Peru. Respondents had to choose between three alternatives. We measured this variable as ordinal using the three alternatives of response in our coding, that is, 1 = yes, the number of employment opportunities has decreased, 2 = no, there have not been significant changes, and 3 = yes, it has increased. Results show that most participants perceived that there were no significant changes regarding the number of employment opportunities in Peru ( $M=2.39$ ;  $SD=.76$ ).

### 3.3. Well-being outcomes

In the present section, we report the instruments used to measure the consequences on work-related and general well-being and the correspondent preliminary analyses.

#### *Work-related well-being*

##### a. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees like their jobs (Spector, 1997). In order to measure it, we used the validated Spanish version of the Job Satisfaction Scale (Price, 1997), which was used in the Psycones Project (Rigotti et al., 2003). This scale comprised 4 items. Participants were asked “How satisfied are you with...?” Sample items were “I find enjoyment in my job” and “I am not happy with my job (r)”. Respondents had to indicate their agreement using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In a previous application in Spain as part of the Psycones Project, the scale showed a reliability of .72 and one dimensional structure.

As regards to our study, we subjected the items from the job satisfaction and career satisfaction scales to a single principal component analysis. The fact that both variables referred to work-related satisfaction and that both instruments used the same response scale, allowed us to test the psychometric properties of our measures conducting the same analysis. As expected, the items loaded in two distinctive factors, that is, job satisfaction and career satisfaction (Appendix E). The job satisfaction scale showed a reliability of .75 ( $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=.67$ ). The high mean would reflect a high proportion of satisfied employees. This result was not surprising due to the fact that earlier research has shown a consistent pattern of high means for job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Rigotti et al., 2003). In fact, we might state that our data is a good representation of the measured variable.

### b. Career satisfaction

Career satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees like their careers. In order to measure it, we not only translated the instrument developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) from English to Spanish, but we also adapted it. This is the most frequently used scale to measure career satisfaction (Hoffmans, Dries, & Pepermans, in press). Due to the fact that we wanted to measure the actual career satisfaction, we avoided the word “goal” from our items. This has been previously done in research with the aim of differentiation career satisfaction from career goals (e.g., Byrne, Dik, & Chiaburo, 2007).

After this adaptation, we used the five-item scale. Participants were asked “How satisfied are you with...?”. It included sample items such as “The wage progress of my career” and “the developments of skills in my career”. Responses were given in a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Greenhaus and colleagues (1990) reported that the scale showed an alpha of .88. In our study, as we mentioned before, the five items of the scale loaded on one factor (range of loadings: .73 to .89). The scale showed a satisfactory alpha of .89 ( $M=3.71$ ,  $SD=.67$ ). As a result, we could conclude that in general, most participants are satisfied with their career (See Appendix E).

### c. Engagement

Engagement refers to “a positive work-related state of fullfimmment” (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006, p. 701). In order to measure it, we focused on the two core-dimensions of engagement: vigor and dedication (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001, 2004; Storm & Rothman, 2003). Previous studies regarding engagement indicated that the absorption dimension lacks a good predictive value and that it seems to function independently from the other engagement dimensions (Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró, & Grau, 2000). Moreover, it has been suggested that absorption might be a consequence rather than a dimension of engagement and that absorption would be related to Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) flow concept (Salanova et al., 2000).

Taking the exposed into account, engqgement was measured using an 11-item scale. We used the vigor (6 items) and dedication (5 items) sub-scales of the validated Spanish version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Salanova et al., 2000). We included the additional item “At my job, I am very resilient, mentally” from the vigor dimension of the Employee Version of the Engagement Scale (Schaufeli, Martínez, Marques Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002). Sample items were “I find the work that I do full of

meaning and purpose” (dedication) and “at my job, I feel strong and vigorous” (vigor). This allowed us to have a good and short measure of engagement. Respondents indicated their agreement in a scale from 0 (never) to 6 (always - every day).

Two dedication items were modified in order to adapt the language used to the Peruvian context. Firstly, “mi trabajo es retador” (my job is challenging) was changed by “mi trabajo tiene retos” (my job has challenges) because the word “retador” is seldomly used in Peru. Secondly, “Estoy entusiasmado *sobre* mi trabajo” was changed by “Estoy entusiasmado *con* mi trabajo” (I am enthusiastic about my job) because in this kind of sentences the word “con” is more frequently used than “sobre”.

Previous applications of the validated Spanish scale indicated a satisfactory validity and reliability. For example, Salanova and colleagues (2000) found that the vigor subscale presented an alpha of .77 (5 items;  $M=3.68$ ,  $SD=.91$ ), while the dedication one had an alpha of .89 ( $M=3.73$ ,  $SD=1.24$ ). They also found a high correlation between both sub-scales (.69). In another study with a Spanish sample of employees, vigor (6 items) showed an alpha of .79 ( $M=3.82$ ,  $SD=.86$ ) and dedication alpha of .89 ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD=1.29$ ) (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002).

In our study, following previous research, we subjected the items of engagement and burnout to a single principal component analysis. We extracted 3 factors: engagement, cynicism and exhaustion (Appendix F). This result was not surprising. Sonnentag (2003) had also found a one-dimensional structure for the items of vigor and dedication. Following Sonnentag (2003), we also used engagement as a single dimension.

Our engagement scale presented a very satisfactory alpha of .91 ( $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=.83$ ). Results indicated that most participants presented a high tendency towards vigor and dedication at the workplace (See Appendix F).

#### d. Burnout

In the present study, burnout was defined as a state of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization towards the job. As a result, burnout was measured taking into account its two core dimensions: cynicism and exhaustion. Professional efficacy (the third dimension of burnout) seems to work independently from the other two sub-scales (Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli & Enzman, 1998). In fact, previous findings revealed exhaustion and cynicism as part of the same latent factor, while professional efficacy loaded on the same factor as the three engagement scales (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Therefore, we used the two core dimensions; they are better validated and they provide the advantage of having a shorter burnout measure.



We used the exhaustion and cynicism sub-scales of the validated Spanish version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS) which presented satisfactory reliability and validity (Salanova et al., 2000). Each sub-scale consisted of 5 items such as “I feel emotionally drained by my job” (exhaustion) and “I have become less interested in my work since I began this job” (cynicism). Respondents indicated their agreement on a 7-point frequency rating scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always - every day).

Some language adaptations were made in order to fit the Peruvian context. Two exhaustion items were modified. Firstly, “Estoy ‘quemado’ por el trabajo” (I feel burned out from my job) was changed for “Estoy ‘desgastado’ por el trabajo” because the word “quemado” has a different connotation in Peru. This word may be associated to the fact that the employee did something wrong in his/her work and therefore, it is very difficult that this person might be hired again. Secondly, “Estoy ‘consumido’ al final de un día de trabajo” (I feel used up at the end of a working day) was modified by “Estoy agotado al final de un día de trabajo” because the word ‘consumido’ was not easily understood. The word ‘agotado’ still communicated the idea of the original item. In conclusion, those items which were modified included words that were placed between brackets in the original Spanish version. Thus, this already indicated some difficulty in its translation from English to Spanish.

Continuing with the Peruvian context, although we did not find previous applications of the MBI-GS, we did find an earlier study where the MBI-Ed (educational form) had been applied to a sample of teachers (Fernández, 2002). In this research, exhaustion and cynicism scales showed satisfactory alphas of .78 and .76, respectively.

Previous applications of the MBI-GS validated Spanish version presented three main results. Firstly, most showed satisfactory reliabilities for both sub-scales. Cynicism presented an alpha ranging from .84 to .87, while exhaustion ranged from .85 to .87 (e.g., Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2000). Secondly, earlier findings indicated that cynicism and exhaustion are two different dimensions of burnout (e.g., Gil Monte & Peiró, 1999). Finally, the mean for cynicism has been consistently low across various studies ranging from 1.20 to 2.45 (e.g., Salanova et al., 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2000). In conclusion, these earlier findings are similar to our results; our cynicism scale presented an alpha of .90 ( $M=.81$ ,  $SD=1.16$ ) and the alpha for exhaustion was of .88 ( $M=2.15$ ,  $SD=1.26$ ) (See Appendix F).

Our results indicated that most participants showed low levels of work related extreme tiredness (exhaustion) and very low levels of indifference towards their job (cynicism).

It is important to point out that as suggested in literature (Salanova et al., 2000; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2000; Schaufeli et al., 2000; Shutte et al., 2000), the item “I just want to do my job and not been disturbed” was finally dropped from our cynicism measure, increasing the scale’s alpha from .82 to .90.

### *General well-being*

#### a. Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is the degree to which the person likes his or her life. For this purpose, we used the validated Spanish version of the Life Satisfaction Scale of Psycones (Isaksson et al., 2003). It consists of 6 items. Participants were asked “How satisfied do you currently feel about...?”. Respondent had to indicate their agreement with items such as “...your life in general?” and “your leisure time?” in a 7 point scale, been 1 = very dissatisfied and 7 = very satisfied.

Previous application of the scale in Spain as part of the Psycones Project (Isaksson et al., 2006) showed an alpha of .79 and a one-dimensional structure.

In our study, the scale revealed an alpha of .84 ( $M=5.28$ ;  $SD=.99$ ) and as expected a one dimensional structure. The high mean would reflect a high proportion of employees who are satisfied with their lives (Appendix G).

#### b. Psychological distress

We used the validated Spanish version of the General Health Questionnaire (Lobo & Muñoz, 1996) which measures psychological distress. It is noteworthy that the psychometric properties of the GHQ-12 are sufficiently good to justify the use of a single scale score in occupational settings (Banks et al, 1980). This instrument consisted of 12 items and two different Likert scales. Six of the items were rated in a scale that goes from 1 (much less than usual) to 4 (more than usual). The other half of the items was rated in a scale that goes from 1 (not at all) to 4 (much more than usual). Following previous research involving GHQ-12, the final scores were recoded on a scale between 0 and 36, with high values representing high levels of distress (e.g., Cassidy & Wright, 2008; Sepulveda et al., 2008; Bauer et al., 2007).

Previous applications indicated favourable psychometric properties of this measure with alphas above .78 (Moreno-Jiménez, Rodríguez-Muñoz, Pastor, Sanz-Vergel, & Garrosa, 2009; Moreno-Jiménez, Mayo, Sanz-Vergel, Geurts, Rodríguez-Muñoz, Pastor, & Garrosa, submitted).

Our study presented a psychological distress scale with a one factor structure and an alpha of .81 ( $M=9.35$ ,  $SD= 4.67$ ), indicating that most participants have a general sense of well-being (Appendix H).

### **3.4. Control Variables**

For the study's purposes, it was considered relevant to control for age, gender and organizations. The results for age and gender are indicated in the sample characteristics section.

#### *Age*

This variable was measured by a single item asking participants "Which is your age?". Respondents had to write down their answer. As suggested by the Psycones Project (Rigotti et. al, 2003), this way of asking assured a higher grade of anonymity to the participants than asking for their birthdays. Following earlier research in the field, we used age (years old) as a continuous variable in all analyses.

#### *Gender*

Gender was measured by a single item asking "Are you...?". Respondents had to indicate whether they were a man or a woman. Gender was dichotomized into 0 = woman and 1 = man.

#### *Organization*

In order to control for the employees's organisation, this variable was coded as seven dummy variables with organization H as the reference group (e.g., 'organization A': 0 = organizations B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A, 'organization B': 0 = organizations A, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization B).

## **4. SAMPLE**

This section describes the characteristics of the participating organizations and individuals. It is important to take notice that the focus of our study is on the individual level.

### **4.1. Sample characteristics**

From March until June 2008, our research questionnaires were administered in Metropolitan Lima to a convenience sample of 651 employees originating from eight

organizations and with a response rate of 78%. As shown in Table 6, the number of questionnaires distributed to each organization corresponded to its number of employees.

Questionnaires with more than 30% of unanswered questions were considered invalid. Additionally, we checked out for outliers (i.e., data points far outside the norm for a variable) because of their possible adverse effects on statistical analyses.

#### **4.2. Organizations**

As regards to the eight organizations that participated in the study (see Table 6, next page), seven of them pertained to the private sector and one to the public sector (Organization F). From the private sector organizations, six were big or medium, while one was small (organization H). This size classification was made in accordance to the number of employees that work in an organization, which was mentioned before. Additionally, five of these private organizations (A, C, D, G and H) might be classified as pertaining to the service industry, while the other two (B and E) could be located in the manufacturing economic sector.

It is important to indicate that, as psychologists, the focus of interest is on the subjective nature of job insecurity and employability. Nevertheless, acknowledging the nature of the research's main variables and in order to favour the interpretation of results, managers were asked if there had been recent organizational changes and if there had been changes in the number of employees. It was reported that only organization D had organizational changes in the last six months. Moreover, in the last three years, only organization H had decreased its number of employees, while all the rest had increased it. Further characteristics of the participating organizations such as gender distribution are shown in Appendix I.

#### **4.3. Employees**

Table 7 (see page 86) comprises details of our sample characteristics according to their organizations, work and family environment, and gender. As a consequence of the participating organizations, most of the 651 participants included in our sample were employed in the private sector (95.7%), worked in a big or medium organization (92.9%), and in the services industry (51.7%).

Regarding the characteristics of our sample in accordance to the interplay with the work environment, about half of the respondents reported having a permanent contract (51.0%) and that they were white collar workers (55.9%). The mean tenure was 5.3 years ( $SD=6.3$ ), being the lowest 2 months and the highest 46 years. Furthermore, the participants reported working an average of 50.7 hours per week ( $SD=11.5$ ).

Table 6. *Number of Distributed, Responded and Valid Questionnaires According to Organizations.*

| Organizations |                         |   | Questionnaires |           |    |       |    |
|---------------|-------------------------|---|----------------|-----------|----|-------|----|
| Name          | Economic Sector         | Main Activity   | Distributed    | Responded |    | Valid |    |
|               |                         |   | N              | n         | %  | n     | %  |
| A             | Private - Service       | Commercialization of fuels and lubricants                         | 63             | 62        | 98 | 60    | 95 |
| B             | Private - Manufacturing | Production and sale of solutions for transport of fluids          | 273            | 214       | 78 | 210   | 77 |
| C             | Private - Service       | Commercialization of office goods                                 | 74             | 64        | 86 | 63    | 85 |
| D             | Private - Service       | Representation of producers of heavy machinery and small vehicles | 250            | 156       | 62 | 144   | 58 |
| E             | Private - Manufacturing | Textile company   | 80             | 78        | 98 | 76    | 95 |
| F             | Public                  | Public Sector – Research unit of the Ministry of Education        | 41             | 28        | 68 | 28    | 68 |
| G             | Private - Service       | Commercialization of chemical products                            | 57             | 53        | 93 | 52    | 91 |
| H             | Private - Service       | Commercialization of goods for the textile industry               | 21             | 18        | 86 | 18    | 86 |
| Total         |                         |   | 859            | 673       | 78 | 651   | 76 |

Table 7. *Sample Characteristics according to Organization, Work and Family Environment, and Gender (N=651).*

|                    |   |                         |       |
|--------------------|---|-------------------------|-------|
| Organization       | Type                                    | Public                  | 4.3%  |
|                    |   | Private - big or medium | 92.9% |
|                    |   | Private - small         | 2.8%  |
|                    | Economic sector                         | Public                  | 4.3%  |
|                    |   | Private - services      | 51.7% |
|                    |   | Private - manufacturing | 44.0% |
| Work environment   | Educational level                       | Low                     | 31.0% |
|                    |   | High                    | 69.0% |
|                    | Occupational position                   | White collar            | 55.9% |
|                    |   | Blue collar             | 44.1% |
|                    | Type of contract                        | Permanent               | 51.0% |
|                    |   | Temporary               | 49.0% |
|                    | Additional job                          | Yes                     | 5.2%  |
|                    |   | No                      | 94.8% |
| Family environment | Family status                           | Spouse or partner       | 59.9% |
|                    |   | Single                  | 40.1% |
|                    | Financial contribution to the household | Sole or main earner     | 66.1% |
|                    |   | Contributory earner     | 33.9% |
|                    | Dependents                              | Yes                     | 90.9% |
|                    |   | No                      | 9.1%  |
| Gender             |   | Woman                   | 23.0% |
|                    |   | Man                     | 77.0% |

Only a minority reported having an additional job in another organization (5.2%), being 9.7 the average hours per week dedicated to it ( $SD=7.3$ ). Regarding the maximum level of education, most respondents had a higher education (69.0%).

Most participants lived with their partners or spouses (59.8%), were the sole or main contributors to the household income (66.1%) and one or more people depended on their salaries (90.9%). In addition, our sample was largely conformed by men (77.0%) and the mean age was 35.0 years old ( $SD=9.6$ ), being the lowest 19 years old and the highest 69.

#### *Similarities and differences with the working population of Metropolitan Lima*

As we explained in our choice for a convenience sample, we intended to indicate the extent to which our sample differed from the Peruvian working population. It is important to highlight once more that because we did not use a random sampling, we did not claim that our sample was representative of the Peruvian labour market, more specifically of the labour market of Metropolitan Lima.

The *Situación del Mercado Laboral en Lima Metropolitana* (2008) report from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI) allowed us to indicate differences and similarities with the working population of Metropolitan Lima (Appendix J). A first important difference was that our sample excluded employees of micro-enterprises who were the majority of the general working population (61.4%). Our sample consisted mainly of employees from big and medium private organizations who were 28.4% of the working population of Lima. Nevertheless, there were some similarities regarding basic demographic features of our sample, such as gender and age, which might be roughly comparable with the characteristics of Lima's working population. To begin with, both showed a higher proportion of men than women, and most individuals were between 25 to 44 years old. However, the gender gap of our sample was much bigger than the one of the working population.

Regarding educational level, our sample had a lower proportion of employees with low education as compared to the general working population of Metropolitan Lima. In fact, the majority of the working population of Lima is concentrated in this group (61.0%). Although our sample only consisted of employees who worked in the services or manufacturing industries, there was a coincidence with respect to the higher proportion of workers employed in services. Another similarity between our sample and the working population is that the majority worked more than 40 weekly hours. However, the gap between those who work more than 40 hours and less than 40 hours is much higher in the sample. In fact, almost all the employees of our sample work more than 40 hours per week.

*Similarities and differences with the working population of big and medium organizations of Metropolitan Lima*

Given that most of our sample (92.9%) was employed in big and medium organizations we decided to make a rough comparison between our sample and the employees of these organizations of Metropolitan Lima (Appendix K). In general lines, we could say that our sample showed some similarities with this population regarding gender and educational level (Ministerio de Trabajo y Promoción del Empleo, 2007). In this sense, our sample presented a high proportion of men, although again the difference between the proportion of men and women was higher in our sample. Additionally, there existed a similar distribution with respect to the educational level, been higher level studies (e.g., technical and university studies) the group were most of the employees were located.

## **5. CORRELATION TABLE**

Table 8 (see next page) has been included in order to present the methodological properties of the used measures as well as an overview on the correlations between the research variables. As shown in this table, the reliability of the scales was satisfactory, with alpha coefficients ranging from .72 to .91 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Table 2.3 also contains the results of the conducted bivariate correlations with pairwise deletion. This preliminary analysis was considered appropriate to illustrate the correlations between the variables of such a wide scope research without losing too many respondents. Consequently, the correlations shown are based on a sample with a minimum of 609 employees and a maximum of 651.

Preliminary results show that employability and job insecurity have a negative correlation. Results also show that as regards to their relationship with the other variables of the study, there are fewer similarities than differences. They show similarities in that young employees, workers with fewer years in the organization and those who are less satisfied with their jobs, will experience more job insecurity and more employability.

Concerning differences, we find that while job insecurity is negatively related to core-self evaluations, high educational level, white collar workers, perceived changes in employment opportunities, career satisfaction, autonomy and social support from the supervisor; in contrast, employability presents a positive relationship with these variables.



Table 8. Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations between Scales (Reliabilities are included between brackets;  $N=651$ ).

|   | M     | SD   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7      | 8      | 9     | 10     | 11     | 12     | 13   | 14     | 15    | 16     | 17     | 18     | 19     | 20     | 21    | 22    |
|---|-------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| 1. Job insecurity-QN                                | 2.36  | .81  | (.81)  |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 2. Employability –external                          | 3.25  | .83  | -.08*  | (.86)  |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 3. Core self-evaluations                            | 3.84  | .50  | -.36** | .12*   | (.79)  |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 4. Man <sup>1</sup>                                 |       |      | .08*   | -.01   | .03    |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 5. Age  | 35.02 | 9.62 | -.20** | -.12** | .12**  | .03    |        |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 6. High educational level <sup>2</sup>              |       |      | -.19** | .28**  | .19**  | -.22** | .11**  |        |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 7. Permanent <sup>3</sup>                           |       |      | -.18** | -.07   | .08    | -.05   | .30**  | .05    |        |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 8. White collar worker <sup>4</sup>                 |       |      | -.23** | .17**  | .18**  | -.40** | .21**  | .55**  | .04    |        |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 9. Tenure   | 5.29  | 6.31 | -.16** | -.15** | .04    | -.09*  | .55**  | -.01   | .45**  | .10*   |       |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 10. Without other job <sup>5</sup>                  |       |      | -.03   | -.11** | .00    | -.03   | -.08*  | -.01   | .08*   | -.00   | .02   |        |        |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 11. Impression management                           | 3.33  | .81  | .19**  | .03    | -.15** | .10*   | -.09*  | -.12** | -.01   | -.16** | .02   | .11**  | (.83)  |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 12. Perceived recent org. changes <sup>6</sup>      | 0.50  | .50  | .20**  | .07    | -.04   | .07    | -.08*  | .02    | -.03   | -.05   | -.08* | .02    | .07    |        |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 13. P. number of workers <sup>7</sup>               | 2.51  | .74  | -.05   | -.01   | -.05   | -.06   | .05    | -.05   | .01    | -.02   | .08   | -.04   | .02    | -.10*  |      |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 14. Perceived number of unemployed <sup>7</sup>     | 2.09  | .91  | .25**  | -.13** | -.22** | -.12** | -.06   | -.23** | -.11** | -.14** | -.01  | -.11** | .10*   | .06    | .02  |        |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 15. P. number employment opportunities <sup>7</sup> | 2.39  | .76  | -.11** | .24**  | .07    | .08*   | .07    | .12**  | .05    | .12**  | -.03  | .04    | .01    | -.01   | .07  | -.23** |       |        |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 16. Psychological distress                          | 9.35  | 4.67 | .32**  | .04    | -.51** | .03    | -.17** | -.15** | -.11** | -.17** | -.06  | .00    | .12**  | .14**  | -.07 | .09*   | -.08* | (.81)  |        |        |        |        |       |       |
| 17. Life satisfaction                               | 5.28  | .99  | -.15** | -.02   | .33**  | .00    | .05    | -.06   | .02    | .03    | .00   | .02    | -.02   | -.07   | .05  | .04    | .01   | -.49** | (.84)  |        |        |        |       |       |
| 18. Job satisfaction                                | 4.05  | .67  | -.25** | -.10** | .44**  | -.05   | .22**  | .02    | .13**  | .08*   | .11** | .03    | -.12** | -.11** | .00  | -.02   | .05   | -.49** | .41**  | (.75)  |        |        |       |       |
| 19. Career satisfaction                             | 3.71  | .67  | -.16** | .17**  | .35**  | -.05   | .20**  | .19**  | .07    | .20**  | .05   | .01    | -.01   | -.08*  | .01  | -.08   | .20** | -.29** | .38**  | .38**  | (.89)  |        |       |       |
| 20. Engagement                                      | 5.00  | .83  | -.13** | -.01   | .28**  | .01    | .21**  | -.05   | .09*   | .05    | .10*  | .09*   | .06    | -.07   | -.01 | .01    | .05   | -.38** | .38**  | .55**  | .28**  | (.91)  |       |       |
| 21. Burnout-cynicism                                | .81   | 1.16 | .34**  | .18**  | -.37** | .08*   | -.19** | -.08*  | -.12** | -.15** | -.09* | -.02   | .14**  | .10*   | .00  | .05    | .02   | .45**  | -.24** | -.53** | -.18** | -.39** | (.90) |       |
| 22. Burnout-exhaustion                              | 2.15  | 1.26 | .28**  | .05    | -.38** | .08*   | -.13** | -.051  | -.03   | -.17** | -.01  | -.05   | .14**  | .15**  | -.01 | .10*   | .04   | .49**  | -.36** | -.42** | -.16** | -.30** | .52** | (.88) |

<sup>1</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>2</sup> Educational level (0 = low educational level; 1 = high educational level); <sup>3</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>4</sup> occupational position (0 = blue collar worker; 1 = white collar worker); <sup>5</sup> Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>6</sup> Perceived recent organizational changes (0 = no; 1 = yes); <sup>7</sup> Responses from 1 = decrease to 3 = increase.

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Moreover, job insecurity is positively related to perceived changes on unemployment and cynicism, while employability has a negative relationship with these variables. Additionally, on the one hand, job insecurity presents a significant negative relationship with permanent work, life satisfaction and engagement, as well as a positive relationship with men, perceived organisational changes, psychological stress and exhaustion. In contrast, employability does not present a significant relationship with these variables. On the other hand, employability presents a significant positive relationship with work-load and skill utilization, while no significant relationship is found as regards to job insecurity.

## **6. ANALYSES**

Unless stated otherwise, hierarchical regression analyses were performed to examine our research questions. In future chapters, the conducted analyses are explained in more detail.

## **7. SUMMARY**

The research was a cross-sectional study with a convenience sample of 651 employees originating from eight organizations based in Metropolitan Lima. Most of the employed measures were validated Spanish instruments previously used in the Psycones Project (Rigotti et. al, 2003). Regarding the validity and reliability of the measures it could be stated that they were satisfactory. On one hand, the alpha coefficients of the measures ranged from .72 to .91 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). On the other hand, the majority of the scales revealed the expected dimensional structure after principal components factor analyses were applied. Therefore, it may be concluded that the instruments used were a good and accurate measure of the study's variables. As regards to the conducted correlation analyses, these preliminary results indicate a negative correlation between employability and job insecurity.



**PART 3**

**STUDIES AND RESULTS**



## **PART 3**

### **STUDIES AND RESULTS**

In accordance to our research aims, the present section of the dissertation comprises three chapters correspondent to the following studies: (1) relationship between job insecurity and employability, (2) their antecedents and (3) their outcomes. In each chapter, we explain the theoretical framework and earlier findings which led us to formulate our hypotheses. Additionally, we include details of the hierarchical regression analyses that we conducted to test our hypotheses, as well as our conclusions regarding the results.



## CHAPTER 1

### RELATION BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY

As seen in Part 1 (Chapter 1), although employability is frequently mentioned in the job insecurity literature (e.g., Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2006; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002), there are still few studies that examine this topic (e.g., Silla et al., 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008). We feel confident that our project may be of help in this research area beginning by our definitions for job insecurity (i.e., employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job) and employability (i.e., employee's perceived possibilities to make job transitions, that is, to gain a job in the external labour market) (Part1, Chapter 1).

In this chapter, we propose that employable workers may be less likely to experience job insecurity, in accordance with previously discussed conceptual similarities and differences (Part 1, Chapter 1), literature arguments and earlier findings (De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008).

#### 1. EMPLOYABILITY AS AN ANTECEDENT OF JOB INSECURITY

According to Sverke et al. (2006) "Job insecurity experiences [...] arise from an interaction between situational characteristics and characteristics of the individual that influence the interpretation the individual makes of environmental factors" (p. 9). Employability might well be regarded as the worker's perception of the dynamic interplay between individual and situational characteristics (see also chapter 2: antecedents), and thus, it may influence job insecurity. Moreover, the role of employability as a predictor of job insecurity was supported in the study by De Cuyper and colleagues (2008) who found that employability was negatively associated with job insecurity. This association can be understood through four arguments, as follows:

*First argument: job insecurity relates to losing the present job while employability refers to gaining a prospective job*

According to our conceptual definitions, the core element of job insecurity is *losing* the job, while the one of employability is making a transition or *gaining* a job. *Losing* and *gaining* reflect the tone of the relation that each construct establishes with work. In the case of job insecurity it is a negative tone, while in the case of employability it is positive. In fact, job insecurity is often portrayed as a work stressor with detrimental consequences for the



employee. On the other hand, some authors consider employability as a resource and therefore, as advantageous for employees because it allows them to use all their capacities, achieve self-realization (De Vries, Gründemann, & Van Vuuren, 2001) and gain flexibility in order to cope with “unpredictable, unstable and more flexible employment relations” (Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006, p. 224). Thus, taking into consideration the negative tone of job insecurity (*losing*) and the positive one of employability (*gaining*) regarding a job, both concepts might be negatively correlated.

In addition, we propose that both employability and job insecurity focus on future employment. While employability puts the spotlight on being continuously employed and building up a career (i.e., a potential job), job insecurity has always been related to the employed who fear unemployment (i.e., concerns regarding continuance of the present job). Therefore, if the worker perceives to have good alternative job prospects, his or her concerns for the continuity in the present job will be lower or diminished. Consequently, in accordance to the similarities and differences between our concepts, we propose an individual's sense of employability as an antecedent for the worker's interpretation of the significance of losing the job.

*Second argument: highly employable workers tend to be offered better and more secure jobs*

Both job insecurity and employability have developed in accordance with labour market theories. Therefore, the association between both concepts can be explained in line with the Flexible Firm Model (Atkinson and Meager, 1986) or the Dual Labour Market Theory (Doeringer & Piore, 1971) also known as the Segmentation Theory. The Flexible Firm Model distinguishes between core and peripheral workers. Core workers perform jobs that are vital to the organization's functioning, and thus, are highly valued by their employers. Therefore, the organization is likely to invest in these workers. In contrast, peripheral workers perform unskilled jobs and are easily replaced. They are mainly contractually flexible or outsourced workers. Since peripheral workers are less crucial for the functioning of the organization, they probably receive little investment on the part of the employer. Core and peripheral workers are likely part of the primary and secondary segment of the labour market, respectively; a distinction made in the Segmentation Theory. Primary segment workers typically hold high wage, high quality and mostly permanent or secure jobs, whereas secondary segment workers hold low-wage, low quality and mostly temporary or insecure jobs. The main assumption in the previously mentioned labour market theories is that core workers hold a stronger labour market position than peripheral workers, which implies investments from the organization.

In this dissertation, we define a strong labour market position as being highly employable. Hence, highly employable workers will be valued by the organization in such a way that they belong to the primary segment workers who hold fairly secure jobs. In contrast, less employable workers might have a vulnerable labour market position and thus, belonging to the secondary segment in which organizations do not invest in job quality or in job security. Considering that job insecurity might be partly based upon contextual factors, it seems reasonable to expect that highly employable as compared with less employable workers might experience less job insecurity.

*Third argument: highly employable workers tend to seek and choose better and more secure jobs*

Another labour market theory that could help us to understand the relationship between job insecurity and employability is Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993). This theory explains labour market strength or vulnerability in accordance with the individual's resources. Human Capital refers to resources that can not be separated from the person like knowledge, learning capacities, skills, social network or values. This approach has two main premises. Firstly, employees may increase their employability by enhancing their human capital (e.g., by investing in their own education or creating and extending their social network inside and outside the organization). In fact, empirical findings show a positive association between education and training, and employability (Berntson, Sverke & Marklund, 2006). Secondly, employees and employers will invest in education, training or networking only if they gain a profit out of it. At the individual level, the benefits of this investment are visible as for example, job security, higher wages, better relations with their colleagues and superiors or better health. It is noteworthy that in the context of this dissertation, better jobs are interpreted as more secure jobs. According to Berntson, Sverke & Marklund (2006), a visible example of the benefits that education investment may bring to an individual are the income differences between college and high school graduates.

The Human Capital Theory puts forward the fact that individuals also play an active role in the pursuit of a strengthened labour market position. In the framework of this theory, it could be assumed that highly employable workers will tend to invest more in the development of their human capital, and consequently they might seek out for better jobs in exchange for their investment. In contrast, workers with less employability might have difficulties in finding a satisfying job and thus, might experience the locked-in phenomenon or occupational confinement (Aronsson & Goransson, 1999). This phenomenon refers to the fact that

employees experience the feeling of been ‘locked-in’ in their current workplace, which involves tasks and jobs that they do not see as desirable. As for highly employable workers, they might perceive themselves more free to quit and look for another job if the current one does not satisfy them, including characteristics such as the level of insecurity. Consequently, highly employable workers might experience less job insecurity than low employable workers. Thus, employability might be a predictor of job insecurity.

*Fourth argument: highly employable workers tend to view changes in the workplace as challenges instead of threats*

Another similarity between employability and job insecurity is their focus on the employee’s interpretation of the workplace. In the case of employability, a subjective approach highlights the importance of the employee’s sense of being employable, rather than the actual action of getting or not a job. In the case of job insecurity a subjective approach captures its problematic character for the worker by considering the discrepancy between his actual and desired job security levels.

The fourth assumption builds up on the subjective nature of both concepts. To explain their relationship, we will use the Appraisal Theory of Lazarus and Folkman (1984; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Berntson & Marklund, 2007), as well as the adaptive nature of employability (Fugate et al., 2004). The main premise of the Appraisal Theory is that individuals behave in accordance to their evaluation (appraisal) of an event. There are two appraisal processes: primary and secondary. The primary appraisal establishes the significance of the event for the individual, while the secondary refers to the individual’s assessment of his/her capacities of dealing with the event. Following this approach, it might be expected that employable workers may view changes in the workplace as a challenge instead of a threat and that despite the situation they still perceive themselves as being able to get another job. Firstly, changes in the workplace might not be interpreted by employable workers as having a significant negative effect on their labour market position, but as an open door to new and better opportunities in the workplace. Secondly, because a high employable worker perceives himself/herself as able to gain a job, he/she will perceive himself/herself as able to cope with an eventual job loss. As a result, when faced with changes in the workplace, employees with high employability might perceive it easier to cope with changes than those with less employability. On the contrary, individuals with less employability might regard the same event as problematic; because of their perceived limited job alternatives they might experience unable to cope with the situation. Consequently, highly employable workers might

perceive less job insecurity than less employable workers. In this line of thought, Forrier and Sels (2003) portray employability as a new labour market protection mechanism in order to gain job security. They argue that employees need to ensure “lifetime employability” instead of “lifetime employment”, meaning that job security should be sought not only within the company but across organizational boundaries.

In addition, Fugate and colleagues (2004) point out the proactive nature of employability which they define as “...a form of work specific (pro)active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realize career opportunities” (Fugate et al., 2004, p. 16). Therefore, they describe employable workers as individuals prone to make efforts in meeting the demands of a changing work situation. Fugate and colleagues (2004) link employability to traits such as optimism, propensity to learn and openness to change. According to these authors, employable individuals will view changes as challenges and have confidence in their possibilities to deal with a changing work situation (optimism), will learn about the requirements of their workplace and will make active efforts such as develop their skills or look for new jobs in order to adapt to the work environment (propensity to learn), and will be more flexible when confronted to uncertain work situations (openness to change). This would indicate as well that highly employable workers might view changes in the workplace as challenges instead of a threat which makes them less likely to experience job insecurity than low employable workers. This fifth argument is supported by the study of Berntson and colleagues (2007) who found “that organisational changes predict job insecurity, particularly in workers who do not feel employable” (De Cuyper et al., 2008, p. 493).

To sum up, in accordance to preliminary findings (i.e., De Cuyper et al., 2008) as well as the four mentioned arguments, it is hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 1: Employability is negatively related to job insecurity.*

## **2. ANALYSES AND RESULTS**

Hypothesis 1 (H1) was tested by performing hierarchical regression analysis, with job insecurity as the outcome. In the first step, organisations were controlled for by coding this variable into 7 dummy variables with organisation H, that is, the smallest one, as the reference group. In the second step, we controlled for age and gender which are traditionally controlled for in the literature. In the third step, employability was entered. Listwise deletion was applied in order to favour a more conservative test of hypotheses. The result is a slightly smaller sample size (N=614). Table 9 shows the results of the conducted analysis.

In order to test Hypothesis 1, the third step of the regression analysis was examined. Employability added in explaining variance in job insecurity. As hypothesized (H1), employability was negatively associated with job insecurity, even when including the control variables. In addition, only three control variables added significantly in explaining job insecurity: organization B as compared to all the other organizations and organization E as compared to all the other organizations were positively related to job insecurity, while permanent compared to temporary employment was negatively associated with job insecurity. These results indicate that workers with high employability as compared to those with low employability are less likely to experience job insecurity. These findings supported our preliminary results, which showed that employability and job insecurity had a negative correlation (-.08). (See Part 2, Methodology Chapter).

*Table 9. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: The Relationship between Job Insecurity and Employability.*

|                | Job Insecurity |         |         |
|----------------|----------------|---------|---------|
|                | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A | .15            | .12     | .13     |
| Organisation B | .30*           | .25*    | .28*    |
| Organisation C | .15            | .14     | .15     |
| Organisation D | .18            | .16     | .18     |
| Organisation E | .32***         | .26**   | .28**   |
| Organisation F | .06            | .05     | .07     |
| Organisation G | .04            | .04     | .04     |
| Age            |                | -.16*** | -.16*** |
| Man            |                | -.05    | -.05    |
| Employability  |                |         | -.09*   |
| $R^2_{adj}$    | .04            | .06     | .07     |
| $R^2$          | .05            | .08     | .09     |
| $\Delta R^2$   | .05***         | .02***  | .01*    |

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

We hypothesized that highly employable workers as compared to less employable workers are less likely to experience job insecurity. The results of the analyses supported this hypothesis in line with earlier findings (De Cuyper et al., 2008) and our four arguments. These arguments propose employability as a predictor of job insecurity and build upon the premise that a worker's sense of employability is crucial in the evaluation of his or her labour market vulnerability, and that this vulnerability will influence his or her perceived possibilities and fear of losing the job. The prospect of future job will influence the employee's assessment of his or her present work situation. In this sense, employability might be regarded by the worker as his or her employment security.

It is noteworthy that, although we argue in favour of employability as a predictor of job insecurity, we acknowledge that it might be possible for a worker with high job insecurity to experience a weak labour market position that could influence his or her sense of employability. This issue will be developed in the Discussions Chapter (Part 4).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **ANTECEDENTS OF JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY**

In the present chapter, we elaborate upon the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability by investigating their potential antecedents. On the one hand, job insecurity has been mainly portrayed in literature as a work stressor with detrimental consequences for the individual (e.g., impaired well-being) and the organization (e.g., turnover intentions). Consequently, research on the field has focused on its outcomes whereas only a number of studies have examined its potential predictors (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Kinnunen et al., 1999; Hartley et al., 1991; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). On the other hand, the lack of consensus regarding employability's definition has resulted in disagreements about which variables may be considered as antecedents (Forrier & Sels, 2003a). However, recent developments reflect an increasing interest to establish its possible predictors, especially as regards to employability conceptualized from a subjective perspective (e.g., De Cuyper et al., submitted; Wittekind, 2007; Berston et al., 2006a). Interestingly, this panorama might indicate that a common point between job insecurity and employability research is the need to clarify their antecedents.

The present chapter has been divided into two sections (i.e., job insecurity and employability) which follow the same structure. Firstly, the different levels of predictors are introduced. Building up on the subjective nature of our main concepts and on previous research, we considered three main levels of antecedents: the individual (e.g., personality), the interplay of the employee with his or her family environment (e.g., family status), the interplay with the work environment (e.g., occupational position) and perceived internal and external labour market (e.g., perceived number of unemployed, perceived number of employment opportunities). Secondly, the relationship between our main variables and their proposed antecedents is explained and hypothesized under the frame of theoretical statements and previous empirical findings. Thirdly, hypotheses are tested by conducting hierarchical regression analyses. Fourthly, we run a single analysis with all significant variables for respectively job insecurity and employability. Finally, results are discussed and conclusions are made regarding our main concepts and their relationship to their predictors.



## **1. ANALYSES**

Before continuing with our study of the antecedents, it is important to explain in detail the analyses performed through out this chapter. Hypotheses were tested by conducting three-stepped hierarchical regression analyses with job insecurity and employability as outcomes. In the first step, organisations were controlled for by coding this variable into 7 dummy variables with organisation H, that is, the smallest one, as the reference group. In this way, we controlled for a certain disturbance that might have risen when we purposely favoured the heterogeneity of our sample. In fact, evidence shows that being employed in a particular organization might actually affect an individual's job insecurity (Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti, & Happonen, 2000). This has also been suggested for employability (Wittekind, Bernard, Geuber, Grote, & Staffebach, 2006).

In the second step, we controlled for age and gender which is typically done in both job insecurity and employability research (Sverke et al., 2004; Forrier & Sels, 2003). Findings have shown that men and women, as well as younger and older employees, tend to differ in their levels of job insecurity and employability (for job insecurity, Sverke et al., 2004; for employability, Berntson et al., 2006). The vulnerability of certain demographic groups is explained using two very different approaches. Job insecurity literature provides explanations mainly in the frame of the traditional breadwinner role that men of certain age are expected to fulfil. Thus, it is suggested that the foreseen consequences of losing their job might increase the chances of this demographic group of experiencing higher insecurity levels. However, this approach has felt short in providing explanations to the mix results in the association of age and gender with job insecurity. As regards to employability, there is a long tradition of acknowledging the segmented nature of the labour market. This implies that some demographic groups might be more vulnerable to experience low employability (Forrier & Sels, 2003; De Cuyper et al., submitted). Therefore, age and gender influence on an individual's employability might be explained in terms of the labour market structure which is shaped by its demands and supply. For instance, some work regulation laws might encourage hiring young employees in detriment of older individuals. In this sense, while other characteristics such as occupational position or level of education might be understood under the framework of dual labour market and human capital theories, these might fall short in explaining age and gender if the particularities of a specific labour market are not taken into account. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to think that age and gender as indicators of the labour market structure might also determine the vulnerability to job insecurity of some particular groups. This could explain why the nature of these associations could vary from

country to country (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004). Taking the exposed into consideration and following previous research in the field, we opted to control for age and gender.

In the third step, predictors corresponding to the same level of antecedents were introduced. For example, occupational level and tenure which belong to the same level of antecedents (i.e., interplay with the job environment) were analyzed in a single step. Listwise deletion was conducted, which is the most widely used missing data technique in Applied Psychology (Roth, 1994). Due to the large number of included predictors, this technique reduced the sample size which varied from 544 (in job environment related variables as antecedents of employability) to 630 (in core self-evaluations as a predictor of job insecurity) individuals. These variations were indicated in the results. In addition, the missing values approach favoured a more conservative test of hypotheses: the smaller size of the samples increased standard errors and reduced significance levels (Acock, A., 2005).

After identifying significant antecedents, hierarchical analyses were run respectively for job insecurity and employability. This time, all significant predictors were included in the third step of the analysis. The results of all the analyses will be presented as the chapter develops.

## **2. ANTECEDENTS OF JOB INSECURITY**

The studies which have examined the potential antecedents of job insecurity built upon the concept's subjective nature; that is, job insecurity arises from the interplay between individual and situational characteristics. In this line, individual variables like personality (e.g., negative affectivity in Sverke et al., 2004; self-esteem in Kinnunen et al., 1999) and objective indicators of work status (e.g., occupational position, type of contract, for a review see Sverke et al., 2006) have been examined as possible antecedents of job insecurity. Although research on predictors has focused on the workplace situation, some studies have included as well the employees' private environment, which influence has been explained in terms of the job loss vulnerability that some individuals might experience due to their household responsibilities (e.g., De Witte, 1999).

### **2.1. Personality**

#### *Core self-evaluations*

Core self-evaluations (CSE) is a basic assessment of one's worth, effectiveness and competence (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). This higher order construct is the common source of specific personality traits, namely: self-esteem (i.e., overall value that one places on

oneself as a person), generalized self-efficacy (i.e., an evaluation of how well one can perform across a variety of situations), internal locus of control (i.e., the belief that one's life is controlled by his or her own decisions, and not by circumstances) and emotional stability (i.e., low neuroticism or the tendency to be confident, secure and steady) (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003; Judge & Bono, 2001). This would explain the strong conceptual and empirical relation that exists between these specific traits.

According to Judge, Locke, Durham and Kluger (1998), individuals with high core self-evaluations regard themselves as able to cope with life's exigencies and have a positive view of life events. It is someone "who is well adjusted, positive, self-confident, efficacious and believes in his or her own agency" (Judge et al., 2003, p. 304). On the contrary, individuals with low core self-evaluations consider themselves as incompetent and will see these same events in a negative way. Moreover, they might see the world as a dangerous place (Judge et al., 1998). Since these life events also include an individual's working life, it can be suggested that employees with low core self-evaluations will perceive more job insecurity than those with high core self-evaluations.

We can also make this assumption by considering the specific traits comprised in core self-evaluations. In this sense, the influence of core self-evaluations on job insecurity might also be explained in the framework of Self-verification Theory (Swann, 1983). This theory builds on the premise that individuals have an inborn preference for predictable and controllable environments. This is reflected by self-verification processes through which individuals strive to create and maintain a social reality coherent with their self-images (Swann, 1983). As a consequence, firstly, they will behave in ways through which they will gain a confirmatory feedback of their self-image; secondly, they will be biased to interpret more confirmatory cues from the environment than there really are present. Research on self-verification suggests that individuals with low self-esteem tend to react in accordance to self-verification motives, thus, holding statements that contradict their role in their achievements and preferring feedback which confirms their poor self-image (Judge & Hurst, 2007). Moreover, low self-esteem individuals tend to stay in jobs where there are no raises but drop out from those with increasing wage levels, while it is the opposite for high self-esteem individuals (Schroeder, Josephs and Swann, 2004, in Judge & Hurst, 2007). Since wage is another indicator of job quality, it might be suggested that individuals with low self-esteem will tend to be employed in low quality jobs which might be characterized by low security levels. This association has also been previously suggested by Judge and Hurst (2007). Therefore, negative core self-evaluations individuals might be more prone to experience job

insecurity; while highly core self-evaluations individuals might be more likely to be employed in better jobs, thus, might tend to experience less job insecurity. Earlier findings on neuroticism support this assumption; neuroticism is associated to negative events such as unemployment (Hadey & Wearing, 1989).

It is noteworthy that the most studied personality traits concerning job insecurity are locus of control and negative affectivity (De Witte, 2005), which are also comprised in the higher order core self-evaluations construct. Individuals with an internal locus of control perceive that they have control over their lives, therefore, they might experience low job insecurity (De Witte, 2005; Van Vuuren et al., 1991). In contrast, employees with an external locus of control will perceive that the causes of events in their lives are beyond their control; therefore they will tend to perceive themselves as more vulnerable and powerlessness. Consequently it is expected that they experience higher job insecurity. In fact, authors like Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) stressed powerlessness as one of the basic characteristics of job insecurity. According to Sverke and colleagues (2004), previous research supports the idea that individuals making internal attributions perceive lower levels of stress and perceived threat, than those who make external attributions. As regards to negative affectivity, it represents parts of the neuroticism subscale while positive affectivity is related to the extraversion subscale (Sverke et al., 2004). Individuals with a high level of negative affectivity will experience higher job insecurity because their negative disposition towards themselves and the environment will spill out to other areas like work (De Witte, 2005). On the other hand, we can find positive affectivity which refers to the individual's tendency of having a general positive outlook about themselves and life. As a result, it can be suggested that employees with emotional stability will experience lower job insecurity, while the ones with high neuroticism will perceive higher job insecurity.

Although research on the relationship between core self-evaluations and job insecurity is still in an initial state (e.g., Maree, 2004), core self-evaluations may be assessed indirectly (Judge et al., 1997). This is relevant in this context because previous findings show that job insecurity is related to such traits as neuroticism (Tivendel & Bourbonnais, 2000), low self-esteem (Kinnunen, Feldt, & Mauno, 2003; Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti, & Happonen, 1999), external locus of control and negative affectivity (Sverke et al., 2004; Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson, & Hartley, 1991). Since these specific traits are an indication of low core self-evaluations, these findings support our assumption that employees with negative self-concepts will experience higher job insecurity than those with positive self-concepts. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 2: Core self-evaluation is negatively related to job insecurity*

As Table 10 shows (see third step of the regression analysis), there was a significant negative relation between core self-evaluations and job insecurity ( $-.34, p \leq .001$ ), even after including the control variables. Thus, core self-evaluations was a fairly powerful predictor adding up to 11% of the explaining variance. These results confirmed hypothesis 2, indicating that high core self-evaluations workers less likely to experience job insecurity. These findings also supported our preliminary results, which showed that core self-evaluations and job insecurity had a significant negative correlation ( $-.36, p \leq .01$ ) (See Part 2, Methodology Chapter).

Interestingly, three control variables also contributed significantly in explaining job insecurity: organization B as compared to all the other organizations and organization E as compared to all the other organizations were positively related to job insecurity, while age was negatively associated with job insecurity. Previous studies have consistently found that occupation and educational level are negatively associated with job insecurity. Thus, a high presence of blue-collar and low-educated employees in organizations B and E as compared to all others, could explain their influence on job insecurity variance. To test this, two bivariate cross-tabulations were conducted with occupational position (management, white-collar and blue-collar levels) and educational level (high, medium and low).

As expected, organizations B and E have the highest concentration of low educated employees within the sample (33.7% and 24.5%) and blue-collar workers within the sample (40.5% and 21.9%). Additionally, organization E reported the highest concentration of low educated (64.0%) and blue-collar workers (82.4%) within the same company. As regards to the effect of age, its probable overlap with the variance caused by tenure will be discussed with the antecedents comprised in the level of interplay with the work environment.

Table 10. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Core-self evaluations as a Predictor of Job Insecurity (N = 630).*

|                                  | Job Insecurity |         |          |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------|----------|
|                                  | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3   |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>      | .14            | .12     | .08      |
| Organisation B                   | .29*           | .25*    | .25*     |
| Organisation C                   | .14            | .13     | .12      |
| Organisation D                   | .18            | .15     | .16      |
| Organisation E                   | .32***         | .26**   | .22**    |
| Organisation F                   | .06            | .05     | .04      |
| Organisation G                   | .05            | .05     | .06      |
| Age                              |                | -.16*** | -.13***  |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                 |                | .06     | .07      |
| Core-self evaluations            |                |         | -.34***  |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i> | .04            | .06     | .17      |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>            | .05            | .08     | .19      |
| $\Delta R^2$                     | .05***         | .03***  | .11***   |
| <i>F</i>                         | 4.78***        | 5.67*** | 14.19*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man)  
 \*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

## **2.2. The interplay of the individual with his or her family environment**

### *Interplay with the family environment*

Following the seminal work of Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) most of the studies which examined the possible predictors of job insecurity have focused on the work environment. Nevertheless, some studies have also considered the role of the worker's family situation (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003). The main assumption behind this choice is that a worker's job insecurity might be influenced by the foreseen consequences that job loss might bring to his or her family life. Thus, workers with more household responsibilities might experience higher job loss vulnerability than those with no major responsibilities. Explanations for this association are based on an individual's role as breadwinner which earlier findings linked to men's traditional role as family provider (e.g., Näswall et al., 2001). Nevertheless, De Witte (1999) has suggested that women might also experience high job insecurity when they are the sole breadwinner in the family. Therefore, the variables that we took into account tried to reflect an individual's family responsibilities beyond gender, that is, family status (i.e., married or cohabiting vs. single), financial contribution to the household (i.e., sole or main earner vs. contributory earner) and number of dependents. Following job insecurity literature, the following could be suggested: firstly, workers who are married or cohabiting will perceive less job insecurity than single workers because in the eventual loss of their jobs they will receive social and economical support from their partners. Secondly, contributory earners might experience less job insecurity than sole or main earners because in the case of job loss they might still have economical support from their partners. In contrast, sole or main earners might experience high job insecurity as compared to contributory earners because of their sole as main provider to the household. This has been previously suggested by Sverke and colleagues. (2004). Thirdly, workers with more family members depending on their income will experience more job insecurity than those with less number of dependents. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 3: Married or cohabiting workers as compared to single workers are less likely to experience job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 4: Contributory earners as compared to contributory earners are less likely to experience job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 5: Number of dependents is positively related to job insecurity.*

Table 11 (see next page) shows the results of the conducted analysis. To test hypotheses 3 to 5, the third step of the regression analysis was examined. Contrary to our hypotheses, none of the family environment related variables added in explaining variance in job insecurity. These results are supported by our preliminary results where no significant relation was found (See Part 2, Methodology Chapter). These results might put forward the fact that vulnerability to job insecurity is not related to its foreseen possible consequences but that this vulnerability arises from an evaluation of the labour market position of the individual, just as it would be the case with employability. Another reason that could explain these results are the characteristics of the Peruvian family, where it is more common than in Europe for single adults to live in their parents' household. This issue is discussed in more detail in the limitations section (Part 4, Chapter 2).

In addition, only two control variables added significantly in explaining job insecurity: organization E as compared to all the other organizations was positively related to job insecurity, while age was negatively associated with job insecurity. It could be suggested that organization E still has an effect on job insecurity because it has the highest concentration of low educated (64.0%) and blue-collar workers (82.4%) within the same company. Interestingly, the effect of organization B disappears once family environment variables are introduced. This might be the case due to listwise deletion, since no major differences are observed in relation to the analyzed family environment variables. On the other hand, age remains as a significant predictor of job insecurity.

### **2.3. Interplay with the job environment**

Educational level and work-related variables such as type of contract contribute to establish the bases of the interplay between the worker and his or her job environment. These variables might set labour market constraints and opportunities for the worker. For instance, the included work-related variables and educational level have been considered in research as objective measures of an individual's labour market position or work status (Sverke et al., 2004). As a result, they might affect the employee's assessment of his or her labour market vulnerability. Therefore, it is not surprising that these variables are traditionally included in and controlled for in job insecurity literature. As regards to impression management, its relationship with job insecurity has not yet been explored. Nevertheless, it might be interesting to examine its influence on job insecurity as a means of comparison with its effects on employability.



*Table 11. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Family Environment Related Variables as a Predictor of Job Insecurity (N = 617).*

|                                    | Job Insecurity |         |         |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|
|                                    | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | .15            | .12     | .12     |
| Organisation B                     | .29*           | .25*    | .24     |
| Organisation C                     | .14            | .14     | .14     |
| Organisation D                     | .18            | .16     | .15     |
| Organisation E                     | .31**          | .25**   | .24***  |
| Organisation F                     | .07            | .07     | .07     |
| Organisation G                     | .05            | .05     | .04     |
| Age                                |                | -.15*** | -.17*** |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                | .07     | .06     |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>3</sup> |                |         | .04     |
| Contributory earner <sup>4</sup>   |                |         | -.00    |
| Dependents                         |                |         | .01     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .03            | .06     | .05     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .05            | .07     | .07     |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .05***         | .03***  | .00     |
| <i>F</i>                           | 4.07***        | 5.03*** | 3.84*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>4</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

### *Educational level*

The relationship between educational level and job insecurity might be explained in the framework of Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993); this theory puts more emphasis on the individual's resources and not only on the labour market conditions and thus, is more appropriate than Dual Labour Market Theory. According to Becker (1993), one of the major representants of the Human Capital Theory, the main investments in an individual's human capital are education and training. Employees and employers will invest in education and training only if they gain a return out of it. Following the Human Capital Theory's premises, it is expected that high-educated workers will look for jobs that will allow them to recuperate their investment. Therefore, they will tend to be employed in jobs with employment security and better work conditions. As we have seen in the previous chapter, employers will also tend to offer better jobs to their most valuable workers. Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson and Hartley (1991) found that people with high-education experience less job insecurity than those with low-education. According to Schaufeli (1992), workers with low educational levels will be more prone to be employed in insecure jobs, than those with high educational level (in De Cuyper et al., 2008). The main point in literature is that low education affects an individual's human capital and that therefore these workers will experience more job loss vulnerability (Sverke et al., 2004). To sum up, we could assume that workers with high educational level will experience low job insecurity, while employees with low educational level will experience high job insecurity. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 6: Educational level is negatively related to job insecurity.*

### *Impression management*

Taking the reasoning of the Human Capital Theory one step further, we could argue that workers might increase not only their human capital but also their social capital. In this sense, workers might invest in creating good impression on their supervisors as a way to promote themselves and make themselves visible in the labour market (Barsness et al., 2005). In this way, it might be seen as a means to acquire a strong position in the labour market. Thus, it could be expected that workers with high impression management might be less prone to experience job insecurity. Thus, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 7: Impression management is negatively related to job insecurity.*

*Work-related variables*

We will use the Dual Labour Market Theory (Doeringer & Piore, 1971) or Segmentation Theory to explain the relationship between job insecurity and the following work-related variables: occupational position (blue collar workers as compared to all other groups; managers as compared to all other groups); type of contract (permanent vs. temporary), weekly working hours, tenure and additional job (without other job vs. having an additional job). The main premise of the Segmentation Theory is that the labour market has evolved into two distinguished sub-segments: primary or core, and secondary or peripheral. Following the Dual Labour Market and the Flexible Firm Model, it seems reasonable to expect that core workers will experience less job insecurity than peripheral workers because they are more likely to be offered the best quality jobs. This means that characteristics associated with the peripheral segment, like low occupational position, temporary contracts, short job tenure, low wages, low educational level and long working hours, probably predict job insecurity. Since having an additional job might be linked to a necessity to increase monthly income, it could be argued that having an additional job might also be associated with the peripheral segment.

As regards to earlier findings, occupational position is one of the most examined predictors of job insecurity. Studies show that blue-collar workers experience higher job insecurity than other occupational groups (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Kinnunen et al., 1999). Type of contract, particularly in reference to temporary and permanent workers, is a variable which has been widely studied in job insecurity research. Type of contract is regarded as an objective indicator of job insecurity. In fact, findings consistently show that temporary workers experience more insecurity than permanent employees (e.g., De Cuyper et al., 2008; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006, 2007; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Parker, Griffin, Sprigg, & Wall, 2002; Sverke, Gallagher, & Hellgren, 2000).

As regards to job insecurity research, working hours has been traditionally controlled for (e.g., De Cuyper et al., 2008) and their relationship remains unclear (Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2006). Nevertheless, earlier findings have linked long working hours to a wide range of risks for workers, families, employers and even the community (for a review see Burke & McAteer, 2007; Caruso, 2006). In the case of employees, it has been reported that longer working hours are related to impaired physical and psychological well-being. Following Segmentation Theory and earlier research, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 8: Occupational position is negatively related to job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 9: Permanent workers as compared to temporary employees are less likely to experience job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 10: Tenure is negatively related to job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 11: Workers without an additional job as compared to workers with other are less likely to experience job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 12: Working hours is positively related to job insecurity.*

Hypotheses 8 to 12 were tested by performing hierarchical regression analysis, with job insecurity as the outcome. Table 12 (see next page) shows the results of the conducted analysis. As hypothesized, there was a negative relationship between workers without an additional job and job insecurity (H11). In the preliminary results, a negative correlation was also found between these two variables although it was not significant.

A significant relation was found between job insecurity and impression management although contrary to our hypothesis (H7) it was a positive one. These results could suggest that impression management, a postulated predictor from the employability literature, might be in the case of job insecurity a consequence rather than an antecedent. In this sense, insecure workers might be prone to invest in impression management as a means to gain strength in the face of a weak labour market position. Thus, impression management may be used by individuals as an informal protection mechanism; informal because it may be used without being constrained by the organization established channels. While level of education indicates the already acquired human capital of an individual, impression management as part of a worker's social capital might be developed beyond organization boundaries. Education level is given by a formal education which takes more time to develop and which might be acquired by the worker even before entering the labour market force, while impression management could be built up by the worker.

Contrary to our expectations there were no significant relationships with educational level (H6), occupational position (H8), type of contract (H9), tenure (H10) or working hours (H12). In order to explain these results, we re-run some additional sets of hierarchical analyses to rule out an overlap between the variations of the considered antecedents. Firstly, we conducted two additional hierarchical regressions; in one analysis educational level was excluded and in the other one educational level was not included. The results showed that when one of these variables was not included, the other one gained in explaining job insecurity variance. These results partially confirmed hypothesis 6; low educational level was

Table 12. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Environment Related Variables as a Predictor of Job Insecurity (N = 550).*

|                                  | Job Insecurity |         |         |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|
|                                  | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>      | .15            | .13     | .07     |
| Organisation B                   | .30*           | .25*    | .18     |
| Organisation C                   | .13            | .13     | .08     |
| Organisation D                   | .16            | .14     | .07     |
| Organisation E                   | .33***         | .26**   | .15     |
| Organisation F                   | .06            | .06     | .02     |
| Organisation G                   | .03            | .03     | -.00    |
| Age                              |                | -.17*** | -.07    |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                 |                | .07     | .01     |
| High education <sup>3</sup>      |                |         | .03     |
| Low education <sup>4</sup>       |                |         | .08     |
| Management <sup>5</sup>          |                |         | -.13*   |
| Blue-collar <sup>6</sup>         |                |         | .06     |
| Permanent <sup>7</sup>           |                |         | -.10    |
| Working hours/w                  |                |         | .03     |
| Tenure                           |                |         | -.05    |
| Without other job <sup>8</sup>   |                |         | -.08*   |
| Impression management            |                |         | .11**   |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i> | .05            | .08     | .13     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>            | .06            | .09     | .16     |
| $\Delta R^2$                     | .06***         | .03***  | .07***  |
| <i>F</i>                         | 5.14***        | 6.07*** | 5.49*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup> High educational level (0 = low and medium educational level; 1 = high educational level); <sup>4</sup>Low educational level (0 = medium and high educational level; 1 = low educational level); <sup>5</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>6</sup> Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>7</sup> Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>8</sup> Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

positively associated to job insecurity ( $.10, p \leq .05$ ) while no significant relation was found as regards high education. They also partially support our preliminary results which indicated that educational level was negatively related to job insecurity ( $-.19, p \leq .01$ ). As regards to occupational position, these last set of analyses partially confirmed hypothesis 8; management was negatively related to job insecurity ( $-.13, p \leq .01$ ), while blue-collar did not presented any significant association. This partially supported our preliminary results which showed that occupational position was negatively related to job insecurity ( $-.23, p \leq .01$ ). These results could indicate that occupational level is a slightly more important predictor of job insecurity than educational level.

Secondly, analyses were also run to out rule an overlap in the variance caused by tenure, age and type of contract. It is noteworthy that the effect of age disappears once work related variables are considered which was not the case when personality or family environment variables were included. A first assumption behind these set of analyses was that employees working for more years in the organization most probably are also the oldest ones. This is also supported by our preliminary analyses which showed an important association between age and tenure ( $.55, p \leq .01$ ). A second assumption is that better quality jobs such as permanent ones would be gained by and offered to workers who have acquired more skills and experience in the labour market; this might be indicated by age. This assumption is supported by our preliminary findings which showed a significant relation between age and permanent type of contract ( $.30, p \leq .01$ ). As regards to our initial hypotheses 9 and 10, they were fully supported once we run the analyses without age. Permanent contract was negatively associated to job insecurity ( $-.11, p \leq .05$ ), while tenure was negatively related to job insecurity ( $-.09, p \leq .05$ ). These results are supported by our preliminary analyses which showed that permanent contract ( $-.18, p \leq .01$ ) and tenure ( $-.16, p \leq .01$ ) have a significant negative relation with job insecurity.

As regards to number of working hours, due to how extended is this in the Peruvian context (discussed in Methodology Chapter, Part 2), it might not be a good indicator of good or bad quality jobs.

It is noteworthy that the influence of the organizations disappeared once work-related variables are including in the analyses. This might support our suggestion that some organizations effect in the variance of job insecurity might be caused by their workers' occupational position and educational level.

## **2.4. Perceived labour market: internal and external**

In their seminal work on job insecurity, Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) highlighted the cues on organizational changes that may be interpreted by the worker as a threat to his or her job continuity. In this way, it was acknowledged that job insecurity is also influenced by organizational conditions and the labour market environment such as rumors of reorganization and changes of management (Kinnunen et al., 2000; van Vuuren and Jacobson, 1991; Ashford et al., 1999; Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, 1984).

Mohr (2000) distinguished different levels for job insecurity definitions which went beyond the individual level. She considered a macro level or what could be considered as the external labour market. She referred to job insecurity in this level as public awareness and related it to levels of unemployment. Another level would relate to the organization which she defined as changing and with insecure conditions. Nevertheless, since job insecurity not only depends on objective characteristics but also on the interpretation of the individual (De Witte & Näswall, 2003), we considered the perceived labour market. As a result, different aspects of the perceived labour market were assessed in this research. From the internal labour market we took into consideration recent organizational changes and variations in the number of employees, while perceived external labour market was evaluated as regards to unemployment levels and employment opportunities.

According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) organizational changes are accompanied by rumours which might increase a climate of unpredictability and insecurity. Thus, it is expected that the presence of organizational changes might increase workers' job insecurity. Although job insecurity is a phenomenon that relates to the internal labour market, it could be argued that employees' job insecurity might be affected not only by the interpretation of the internal labour market cues, but as well by trends in the external labour market. In fact, internal labour market changes might be permeated by changes going on in the external market. Following the definitions of Mohr (2000), it might be suggested that if an employee perceives that the organizational changes create a certain insecurity climate or that the number of unemployed has been growing, job insecurity might arise. In contrast, the number of employees or of employment opportunities might not be linked to the individual's worries and perceived probabilities of losing the current job. To sum up, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 13: Perceived presence of recent organizational changes will be positively related to job insecurity.*

*Hypothesis 14: Perceived increase in the number of unemployed will be positively related to job insecurity.*

As indicated in Table 13 (see next page), results confirmed our hypotheses: perceived presence of recent organizational changes and perceived increase in the number of unemployed added in explaining job insecurity variance. These findings supported our preliminary results, in that perceived organizational changes (.20,  $p \leq .01$ ) and perceived changes in unemployment (.25,  $p \leq .01$ ) have a positive significant relation with job insecurity (See Methodology Chapter, Part 2).

## **2.5. Conclusions**

As shown in Table 14 (see page 121), a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted with all the significant predictors of job insecurity. Low core self-evaluations was a fairly strong predictor of job insecurity. As regards to the individual and its interplay with the job environment, only management contributed in explaining the variance. It could be suggested that occupational position might be a better objective indicator as well of job insecurity. In this sense, it would be an indication that in the case of downsizing or other organizational changes, the lower ranks have more possibilities to leave the organization. We also can observe that perceived organizational changes as well as unemployment rates predicted job insecurity, which goes in line with Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984) who stated the importance of organizational cues in the levels of job insecurity. This also puts forward the importance of a subjective approach, the way in which the context is interpreted will actually influence job insecurity levels. The effect of the control variables on job insecurity, highlights the importance that characteristics of the organization such as occupational position and educational level of their workers might have. The same can be stated about age which as seen before correlated with tenure and type of contract.

Further points of discussion might be that contrary to our expectations family environmental related variables did not predicted job insecurity, after controlling for organizations, age and gender. Including both family environmental related variables and the ones related to the interplay with the work environment allowed us to compare two positions with respect to perceived job loss vulnerability. The first position, builds up on the idea that an individual's sense of vulnerability arises from the consequences that an eventual job loss may carry even beyond the boundaries of working life. In this concern, we have selected variables which would really indicate household responsibilities.



Table 13. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Perceived Labour Market as a Predictor of Job Insecurity (N = 605).*

|   | Job Insecurity |         |         |
|---|----------------|---------|---------|
|   | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>   | .17            | .14     | .16     |
| Organisation B  | .32*           | .28*    | .19     |
| Organisation C  | .17            | .17     | .17     |
| Organisation D  | .21            | .18     | .21     |
| Organisation E  | .35***         | .29**   | .30**   |
| Organisation F  | .09            | .08     | .09     |
| Organisation G  | .05            | .05     | .09     |
| Age   |                | -.15*** | -.12**  |
| Man <sup>2</sup>  |                | .06     | .09     |
| Perceived presence of recent organizational changes (ILM) <sup>3</sup>          |                |         | .20***  |
| Perceived increase in the number of employees (ILM) <sup>4</sup>                |                |         | -.04    |
| Perceived increase in the number of unemployed (ELM) <sup>4</sup>               |                |         | .24***  |
| Perceived increase in the number of employment opportunities (ELM) <sup>4</sup> |                |         | -.04    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <sub>adj</sub>  | .04            | .07     | .16     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>   | .06            | .08     | .18     |
| $\Delta R^2$  | .06***         | .02***  | .10***  |
| <i>F</i>  | 5.01***        | 5.65*** | 9.79*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Perceived recent organizational changes (0 = no; 1 = yes); <sup>4</sup> Responses from 1 = decrease to 3 = increase.

\* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

Table 14. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Significant Predictors of Job Insecurity (N = 583).*

|   | Job Insecurity |         |         |
|---|----------------|---------|---------|
|   | Step 1         | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>                         | .17            | .15     | .08     |
| Organisation B                                      | .33**          | .29*    | .15     |
| Organisation C                                      | .14            | .15     | .10     |
| Organisation D                                      | .18            | .17     | .13     |
| Organisation E                                      | .34***         | .28**   | .20*    |
| Organisation F                                      | .07            | .07     | .05     |
| Organisation G                                      | .05            | .06     | .06     |
| Age   |                | -.16*** | -.12**  |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                                    |                | .07     | .09     |
| Core-self evaluations                               |                |         | -.27*** |
| Management <sup>3</sup>                             |                |         | -.08*   |
| Without other job <sup>4</sup>                      |                |         | -.04    |
| Impression management                               |                |         | .07     |
| P. recent organizational changes (ILM) <sup>5</sup> |                |         | .16***  |
| P. number of unemployed (ELM) <sup>6</sup>          |                |         | .15***  |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>                    | .05            | .07     | .23     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>                               | .06            | .09     | .25     |
| $\Delta R^2$  | .06***         | .03***  | .17***  |
| <i>F</i>  | 5.14***        | 6.07*** | 5.49*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup> Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>5</sup>

Perceived recent organizational changes (0 = no; 1 = yes); <sup>6</sup>Responses from 1 = decrease to 3 = increase.

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

The second position highlights that job loss vulnerability arises from the interpretation of objective indicators of labour market position (e.g. type of contract), that is, the objective chances of losing the job. In line with earlier research (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004) our findings indicate that the second position results more appropriate in the understanding of job insecurity. These results might also suggest the importance of the cognitive component of job insecurity; for the worker is important to evaluate his or her chances of losing the job in accordance to his or her labour market position. Therefore, it could be suggested that the role of certain characteristics of the worker such as age, gender or even family status might be studied as long as they are linked to an individual's labour market position, that is, that these variables might influence an individual's chances of job loss or employment continuity.

As regards to family environmental related variables, it is also relevant to point out that another reason for results not to support our Hypothesis 3 with respect to family status, is that it was not the best measure of social support, because only a minority of the single workers reported living on their own while the majority of them lived with family or friends. Therefore, although single they may still do not have to be responsible for the household income, in case of losing their jobs.

Concerning additional job only a few (5.1%) reported having another job, so due to this reduced number, the variable may not have still added for job insecurity variance after including other significant predictors. As regards to weekly working hours, it may be a variable that in the Peruvian context does not account for differences in labour market position. As we already explained in the Methodology Chapter (Part 2), most Peruvian employees work more than 40 hours per week.

### **3. ANTECEDENTS OF EMPLOYABILITY**

As we mentioned before, there is no consensus regarding the employability concept. This has resulted in disagreements about which variables must be considered as part of the concept itself or as antecedents (Forrier & Sels, 2003). Therefore, it is not surprising that recent efforts to establish employability antecedents have taken as a starting point an overview of the main conceptual models of employability (De Cuyper et al., submitted; Wittekind, 2007). Basically, there are two broad categories in which we could classify employability antecedents. The first one relates to the addition or not of contextual factors, while the second one is determined by the nature of the considered components (Wittekind, 2007). As regards to the first classification, we consider its three levels, that is, the individual (e.g., personality), the organization (e.g., perceived number of employees) and what we could

classify as macro or external labour market factors (e.g., perceived number of employment opportunity). We do so with the particularity that we build upon a subjective approach to employability, thus, we study these levels in their interaction with the individual. As concerns to the component models of employability, they can be classified as investments in human capital, current level of job related skills, willingness to be mobile and knowledge of the labour market (Wittekind, 2007). As this section develops we will make reference to some of these models because they might be helpful in understanding our predictors. For reasons that have already been explained in our chapter of concept definition, we do not consider willingness to be mobile.

### **3.1. Personality**

#### *Core self-evaluations*

Following the core self-evaluations theory, explained in the previous section, we could conclude that one of the main assumptions of Judge and colleagues (Judge, Locke, Durham, 1977) is that individuals with high core self-evaluations will evaluate themselves as secure, confident and able to cope with life's and work's exigencies. Thus, it might be expected that they perceive themselves as able to get a new job, that is, as being employable. Furthermore, although personality studies in the employability context have heavily focused upon vulnerable groups and objective employability (e.g., Washington, 1999), we could make some assumptions about the relationship of core self-evaluations and employability based upon four issues: the proactive and adaptive nature of employability (e.g., Fugate et al., 2004), the influence of core self-evaluations on the interpretation or appraisal of a situation, self-verification theory (Korman, 1979) and previous findings on specific traits comprised in core-self evaluations.

According to the adaptable and proactive nature of employability, it might be assumed that employees with positive self-concepts will experience higher employability than those with negative self-concepts. It might be suggested that core self-evaluations is related to the active nature of employability. Being able to cope with the demand of gaining a job can be linked to an indicator of core self-evaluations like locus of control. For example, it may be expected that employees with internal locus of control will experience high employability because they believe that they can control the causes of events in their personal and working life. Therefore, they may perceive that they can easily gain a job (Feldman & Ng, 2007). On the contrary, employees with external locus of control are expected to experience low employability. In fact, research shows that workers with internal locus of control tend to have

more successful careers (Ng et al., 2005), which increases their chances of gaining a new job both in the internal and in the external labour market (Feldman & Ng, 2007).

Personality traits might affect the way an employee perceives changes at the workplace, that is, if he or she perceives them as a challenge or as a hazardous situation (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). In this sense, an individual's appraisal of the world will be affected also by the assumptions that he or she makes of himself or herself (Piccolo et al., 2005). Since highly core self-evaluations individuals are prone to interpret situations in a positive way (Judge, Locke, Durham, Kluger, 1998), it could be suggested that it is more likely that they experience different situations in the workplace as opportunities rather than hazards. In this line, Locke, Locke, Mc Cleat & Night (1996, in Judge & Bono, 2001) suggest that individuals with higher self-esteem will view a challenging job as an opportunity from which they can master and gain benefit, while individuals with low self-esteem will regard it as a chance to fail. Following this statement, it might be suggested that when facing the same workplace situation highly self-esteem individuals will experience higher employability than less self-esteem individuals. Thus, it is more likely that highly core self-evaluation workers will experience higher employability than less core-self evaluation workers. Furthermore, according to Judge & Bono (2001) high self-esteem maintains optimism in case of failure, making future success more likely. Extending this statement to core self-evaluation it can be suggested that positive self-concepts workers might be more optimistic when it comes to the issue of gaining a job than negative self-concepts workers. On the contrary, it could be the case that negative self-concepts individuals will avoid failure possibilities like the one that could be involved in job transitions and therefore, they could be prone to experience low employability. In conclusion, it might be suggested that core self-evaluations might predict high employability.

Korman's (1979) self-consistency theory considers that workers with more self-esteem (a core self-evaluation indicator) will choose occupations in accordance to their interests and that individuals will act in accordance to their self-image. Therefore, it could be assumed that highly core self-evaluations workers will consider themselves more likely to gain a new job, than unable to succeed in this matter. Moreover, Judge, Bono, Erez and Locke (2005) found that positive self-concepts are more likely to pursue self-concordant goals. Consequently, it can be suggested that positive self-concepts employees will not only perceive that they are able to gain a job but they will also look for jobs that they consider challenging and valuable. In fact, it is not surprising that high core self-evaluations individuals tend not only to perceive more variety, challenge and intrinsic worth in their jobs (Judge et al., 1998). Besides, they

actually have the more challenging jobs (Judge et al., 2000). They will consider themselves as able to have more work alternatives, and therefore will choose for the best jobs. For instance, it was found that high core self-evaluations predicted successful work trajectories as regards to job satisfaction, pay and occupational status (Judge & Hurst, 2008), outcomes which might be linked as well to high employability.

As regards to research on the relationship between employability and self-efficacy, although Berntson and colleagues (Berntson, Sverke, Näswall, & Hellgren, 2006) argued in favour of a reverse causation, their findings showed a positive relation between self-efficacy and employability. In fact, self-efficacy is positively related both the total number of job offers and the number of offers from preferred employer (Moynihan, Roehling, Lepine, & Boswell, 2003) which might be linked to employability.

Interestingly, one of the personality traits which has been more studied as regards to employability is the openness to experiences (Forrier & Sels, 2003). Taking into account that the big 5 might share an overlap with core self-evaluations (Feldman & Ng, 2007; De Cuyper et al., submitted) it is relevant to consider that workers with openness to experience may be more prone to look for new jobs as a means to seek out excitement (Van Dam, 2004; Eby et al., 2003, De Cuyper et al., submitted). In conclusion, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 15: Core self-evaluations is positively related to employability.*

Table 15 (see next page) shows the results of the conducted analysis. Core self-evaluations added in explaining variance in employability. As hypothesized, core self-evaluations was positively associated with employability (H15), even when including the control variables. These results indicate that workers with high core self-evaluations as compared to those with low core self-evaluations are more likely to experience employability. These findings supported our preliminary results, which showed that core self-evaluations and employability had a positive correlation ( $.12, p \leq .001$ ). (Part 2 - Methodology Chapter).

Four control variables also added significantly in explaining employability: organization B as compared to all the other organizations, organization D as compared to all the other organizations and organization F as compared to all the other organizations were positively related to employability, while age was negatively associated with employability. As regards to why these organizations continue to explain the variance of employability in the third step, it could be suggested that it is due to the composition of their work force. Level of education is a variable positively associated to employability (Berntson et al., 2006; Wittekind, 2007)

Table 15. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Core-self Evaluations as a Predictor of Employability (N = 623).*

|                                  | Employability |        |         |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------|---------|
|                                  | Step 1        | Step 2 | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>      | .13           | .12    | .13     |
| Organisation B                   | .26*          | .24*   | .25*    |
| Organisation C                   | .11           | .09    | .10     |
| Organisation D                   | .27*          | .25*   | .25*    |
| Organisation E                   | .18*          | .15    | .17     |
| Organisation F                   | .19**         | .18**  | .18**   |
| Organisation G                   | .01           | .00    | -.00    |
| Age                              |               | -.10*  | -.11**  |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                 |               | -.04   | -.05    |
| Core-self evaluations            |               |        | .12**   |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i> | .03           | .04    | .05     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>            | .04           | .05    | .06     |
| $\Delta R^2$                     | .04***        | .01*   | .01**   |
| <i>F</i>                         | 3.69***       | 3.71** | 4.22*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man)

\* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

and it might be the case that the concentration of highly educated workers in these organizations could account for the resulting variance. To test this, a bivariate cross-tabulation was applied with educational level (high, medium and low). As hypothesized, we found that these three organizations have the highest concentration of high educated workers within the organization (B = 28.2%, D = 47.5% and F = 81.5%). As regards to the effect of age, this will be analyzed further on, in parallel to the antecedents comprised in the level of interplay with the work environment.

### **3.2. The interplay with the family environment**

This is an area which has not been quite explored in employability. On the contrary, research has focused on objective labour market indicators which would be interpreted by the individual in order to assess his or her employability. The only references to family environment that can be found in employability research are the ones related to the so called ‘shock events’ (e.g., Lee & Mitchell, 1994). It is hypothesized that events such as a partner who gets a job in another region, might trigger transition to other job responses (Forrier & Sels, 2003). For the purpose of comparing the antecedents of job insecurity and employability, we will include family environment related variables as possible predictors.

Following the bread-winner reasoning exposed in the previous section, it could be suggested that individuals who have a financial support may be more open to look for other job alternatives, than those who do not have a partner or are the sole responsible for household income. Moreover, thanks to this support they might feel more free and able to concentrate their efforts in gaining another job. On the other hand, workers who have more people depending on their income might feel more attached to their present job and thus might be less adventurous in looking for job alternatives. Thus, it could be hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 16: Married or cohabiting workers are more likely to experience employability as compared to single workers.*

*Hypothesis 17: Contributory earners are more likely to experience employability as compared to contributory earners.*

*Hypothesis 18: Number of dependents will relate negatively with employability.*

We analyzed the third step of the hierarchical analysis to explore the relationship between family environment related variables and employability (Table 16, see next page). None of our hypotheses was confirmed. These findings are partially supported by our



Table 16. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Family Environment Related Variables as a Predictor of Employability (N = 611).*

|                                    | Employability |         |         |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|
|                                    | Step 1        | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | .14           | .12     | .12     |
| Organisation B                     | .26*          | .25*    | .24*    |
| Organisation C                     | .12           | .10     | .10     |
| Organisation D                     | .27*          | .26*    | .23*    |
| Organisation E                     | .16           | .14     | .14     |
| Organisation F                     | .19**         | .17**   | .17**   |
| Organisation G                     | .01           | .00     | .00     |
| Age                                |               | -.09*   | -.09*   |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |               | -.06    | -.06    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>3</sup> |               |         | .07     |
| Contributory earner <sup>4</sup>   |               |         | .07     |
| Dependents                         |               |         | .01     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .03           | .04     | .04     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .04           | .05     | .06     |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .04***        | .01**   | .01     |
| <i>F</i>                           | 3.56***       | 3.53*** | 2.93*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>4</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

preliminary results in which a significant positive relation was found between contributory earners and employability (.02 ,  $p \leq .01$ ). As seen before, four control variables added significantly in explaining employability: organization B as compared to all the other organizations, organization D as compared to all the other organizations and organization F as compared to all the other organizations were positively related to employability, while age was negatively associated with employability. These results indicate that work-related variables are more important for determining employability, hinting once more at the importance of educational level as determinant of employability.

### **3.3. Interplay with the job environment**

The interplay with the job environment might affect an employee's assessment of his or her labour market vulnerability or attractiveness. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the employability literature variables such as occupational position and tenure are traditionally included and controlled for.

#### *Educational level*

One of the most studied and most important predictors of employability is education. This builds up on the importance of human capital to understand employability. In fact, De Cuyper and colleagues (submitted) state that the core component of all employability definitions is an individual's perceived possibilities in the frame of Human Capital. Since one of the main indicators of human capital is education, the potential role of this variable as a predictor of employability has been researched (e.g., Berntson et al., 2006; Wittekind, 2007).

One of the main premises of Human Capital Theory is that employees may increase their employability by enhancing their human capital. Workers expect a return for their investment on gaining skills and knowledge (De Cuyper et al., submitted). Thus, it has been suggested that education influences the worker's number of choices in the labour market (Sverke et al., 2004). Moreover, achieving higher education might make it easier for an individual to build up a career (Berntson et al., 2006). Besides, recent findings have shown a positive association between education and employability (Berntson et al., 2006; Wittekind, 2007). Following these statements, it might be argued that workers with lower levels of education do not possess the necessary skills and knowledge to provide themselves with various job alternatives. Therefore, they will perceive themselves less able to make job transitions than those with higher education. On the contrary, workers with higher levels of education will be able to make job transitions with more ease. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 19: Educational level is positively related to employability.*

### *Impression Management*

According to Forrier and Sels (2003) the social capital was a variable which was not so studied in the employability field. Nevertheless, it seems this situation is changing in recent years. A number of studies have also considered social capital as an employability antecedent (De Cuyper et al., submitted). Impression management is considered as social capital in the model of Fugate and colleagues (2004) and has usually been regarded as part of the “knowledge of the labour market” models of employability (e.g., Kluytmans et al., 1999)

Extending the reasoning of the Human Capital Theory one step further, we could argue that workers might increase not only their human capital but also their social capital, that is, they can increase the strength of their work related networks. This could help the individual to gain knowledge about the labour market (Kluytmans & Ott, 1999) and in this way, increase their chances of getting a new job. It has also been suggested that impression management is a way of gaining recognition, thus, making one’s employability assets more visible at the work place (Van der Heijden, 2002). In this sense, employability is a way of increasing one’s possibilities to make job transitions. Furthermore, earlier findings have shown that social capital enhances employability (Wittekind, 2007; Eby et al., 2003; Van der Heijden, 2002). Thus, it might be hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 20: Impression management is positively related to employability.*

### *Work related variables*

An issue which is very much at the center of employability research relates to indicators of labour market position. This trend originated hand in hand with the development of the concept, that is, the assumption that there exists a segmented labour market which will favour or discriminate people according to certain characteristics. In the case of the employed, formal indicators such as type of contract or occupational position become indicators of an individual’s labour market status (Forrier & Sels, 2003).

Work-related variables are objective measures of an individual’s labour market position and therefore, might influence the worker’s interpretation of his or her own sense of employability (e.g., opportunities of getting another job). In order to explain the influence that these variables might have over employability we will use Segmentation Theory. In line with this theory, it could be suggested that core workers as compared to peripheral workers are

more likely to experience employability. Indeed, according to the segmentation approach, core workers are more attractive for the labour market than peripheral workers. In fact, literature tends to portray peripheral employees as people with low education and problematic work histories (Berntson, Sverke & Marklund, 2006). Thus, being employed on a good occupational status and high educational level will predict employability. This could also might be hypothesized for long working hours which might be a characteristic of low quality jobs, rather than of high quality ones. The only exception would be long term tenure, a typical characteristic of core employees. Research shows that long term tenure might be associated to internal employability whereas it might interfere with the development of external employability (De Cuyper et al., submitted; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). Thus, it might be suggested that short term tenure workers as compared to long term tenure workers will more likely experience employability. Following the same line, it might also be suggested that permanent contract might also interfere with external employability. Thus, a negative relationship might be expected. As regards to additional job, employees who already have another job outside the organization might experience employability, regardless the quality of the job. To sum up, we hypothesize that:

*Hypothesis 21: Occupational position is positively related to employability.*

*Hypothesis 22: Permanent workers as compared with temporary employees will be more likely to experience employability.*

*Hypothesis 23: Tenure is negatively related to employability.*

*Hypothesis 24: Workers without an additional job as compared to workers with other job will experience less employability.*

*Hypothesis 25: Working hours is negatively associated to employability.*

Results shown in Table 17 (see next page), confirmed that impression management (H20) and having an additional job (H24) are positively related to employability. Our findings partially confirmed that educational level is positively related to employability, being low education as compared to the other educational levels a stronger predictor. Occupational position positive association with employability was also partially confirmed, been in this case management as compared to the other occupational groups a stronger predictor. In order to explain these results, we conducted two additional hierarchical regressions; in one analyses we excluded educational level and in the other one occupational position was not included. This was done keeping in mind that the explained variation of both variables might be

Table 17. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Environment Related Variables as a Predictor of Employability (N = 546).*

|                                | Employability |         |         |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|
|                                | Step 1        | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>    | .14           | .13     | .19     |
| Organisation B                 | .27*          | .26*    | .29*    |
| Organisation C                 | .12           | .09     | .12     |
| Organisation D                 | .27**         | .26*    | .20     |
| Organisation E                 | .16           | .14     | .21*    |
| Organisation F                 | .18**         | .17**   | .10     |
| Organisation G                 | -.00          | -.00    | .04     |
| Age                            |               | -.08    | -.08    |
| Man <sup>2</sup>               |               | -.05    | -.01    |
| High education <sup>3</sup>    |               |         | .09     |
| Low education <sup>4</sup>     |               |         | -.21*** |
| Management <sup>5</sup>        |               |         | .10*    |
| Blue-collar <sup>6</sup>       |               |         | -.07    |
| Permanent <sup>7</sup>         |               |         | -.02    |
| Working hours/w                |               |         | .06     |
| Tenure                         |               |         | -.07    |
| Without other job <sup>8</sup> |               |         | -.09*   |
| Impression management          |               |         | .07**   |
| <i>R<sup>2</sup>adj</i>        | .03           | .04     | .14     |
| <i>R<sup>2</sup></i>           | .05           | .05     | .17     |
| $\Delta R^2$                   | .05***        | .01     | .12***  |
| <i>F</i>                       | 3.63***       | 3.38*** | 5.99*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup>High educational level (0 = low and medium educational level; 1 = high educational level); <sup>4</sup>Low educational level (0 = medium and high educational level; 1 = low educational level); <sup>5</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>6</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>7</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>8</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

overlapping. These last results showed that effectively when only one of these variables was included, the results supported fully our hypotheses. Educational level (high education: .16,  $p \leq .001$ ; low education: -.25,  $p \leq .001$ ) had a slightly stronger effect on employability than occupational level (management: .16,  $p \leq .001$ ; blue-collar: -.18,  $p \leq .001$ ). These results are also confirmed by our preliminary results, which show that educational level (.28,  $p \leq .01$ ) and occupational level (.17,  $p \leq .01$ ) were positively associated with employability (See Part 2 - Methodology Chapter, Table 8, page 89).

Just as in the previous section, analyses were also run to rule out an overlap in the variance caused by tenure, age and type of contract. In the analyses of employability predictors it is also observed that effect of age disappears once work related variables are considered which was not the case when personality or family environment variables were included. The first assumption behind these new set of analyses is that employees working for more years in the organization most probably are also the oldest ones. As previously discussed, this is also supported by our preliminary analyses which showed an important association between age and tenure (.55,  $p \leq .01$ ). A second assumption is that better quality jobs such as permanent ones would be offered to workers who have acquired more experience of their work in the organization; this might be indicated by age. This assumption is supported by our preliminary findings which showed a significant relation between age and permanent type of contract (.30,  $p \leq .01$ ). Thus, it might be suggested that younger workers have more likely a temporal contract and low tenure.

The analyses conducted without including age confirmed hypothesis 23, tenure was negatively associated with employability (-.12,  $p \leq .01$ ). These results are supported by our preliminary analyses which showed that tenure has a significant negative relation with employability (-.15,  $p \leq .01$ ). In contrast, no significant relation was found between type of contract and employability. This supported our preliminary findings. These findings might suggest that type of contract is not such an important variable in the case of external employability.

As regards to number of working hours, due to how extended is this in the Peruvian context (discussed previously in Part 2 - Methodology Chapter), it might not be a good indicator of labour market segmentation.

It is noteworthy that when including work-related variables in the analyses, organizations B and E contribute in explaining the variance of employability. Organizations B and E have the highest concentration of low educated employees within the sample (33.7%

and 24.5%) and blue-collar workers within the sample (40.5% and 21.9%). Thus, they might be overlapping with the variance caused by occupational and educational level.

### **3.4. Perceived labour market: internal and external**

In line with our subjective approach, employability has been traditionally seen in literature as time and place related, depending both in personal variables and on the labour market context (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006)). Thus, the interpretation that the individual makes about his or her labour market environment might affect his or her sense of employability. It has been suggested that the organizational context might affect an individual's sense of internal employability (e.g. Forrier & Sels, 2003). Taking into consideration that our employability definition only considers the external labour market, no significant relation is expected with the internal labour market.

As regards to external employability, Berntson et al. (2006) found evidence that structural factors, such as the availability of jobs, influence employability. In line with the authors, a perceived increase in the number of employment opportunities, in other words an increase in the job supply, might be linked to increased employability. In fact employability models that focus on knowledge of the labour market stress the fact that knowing the possibilities of making job transition might enhance an individual's employability. This makes more sense if we consider that our employability definition grew upon the concept of ease of movement which has been defined as an individual's perception of available job alternatives in the internal and external labour market (March & Simon, 1958). Furthermore, since the emphasis has been put on the availability of jobs rather than unemployment level, we do not expect a relation between perceived number of unemployed and employability. Thus, it could be hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 26: Perceived increased number of employment opportunities will be positively associated with employability.*

As indicated in Table 18 (see next page), perceived increase in the number of employment opportunities added in explaining employability variance. This finding supported our preliminary results, in that perceived changes in employment opportunities is positively related to employability (.24,  $p \leq .01$ ). As expected no significant relationship was found with internal labour market measures, nor with perceived increased unemployment.

Table 18. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Labour Market Related Variables as a Predictor of Employability (N = 601).*

|   | Employability |         |         |
|---|---------------|---------|---------|
|   | Step 1        | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>                                     | .13           | .12     | .14     |
| Organisation B  | .25*          | .25     | .22     |
| Organisation C  | .12           | .09     | .08     |
| Organisation D  | .23*          | .25*    | .26*    |
| Organisation E  | .18           | .16     | .21*    |
| Organisation F  | .19**         | .18**   | .18**   |
| Organisation G  | -.01          | -.01    | .02     |
| Age   |               | -.10*   | -.10**  |
| Man   |               | -.06    | -.09*   |
| Perceived recent organizational changes (ILM) <sup>3</sup>      |               |         | .08     |
| Perceived number of employees (ILM) <sup>4</sup>                |               |         | -.03    |
| Perceived number of unemployed (ELM) <sup>4</sup>               |               |         | -.06    |
| Perceived number of employment opportunities (ELM) <sup>4</sup> |               |         | .25***  |
| <i>R<sup>2</sup>adj</i>   | .03           | .04     | .12     |
| <i>R<sup>2</sup></i>  | .05           | .06     | .13     |
| $\Delta R^2$  | .05***        | .01     | .07***  |
| <i>F</i>  | 4.02***       | 4.02*** | 6.56*** |

<sup>1</sup>Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Perceived recent organizational changes (0 = no; 1 = yes); <sup>4</sup>Responses from 1 = decrease to 3 = increase.

\* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001



### **3.5. Conclusions**

A hierarchical regression analysis was run, this time with all the significant variables for employability (Table 19, see next page). Core self-evaluations predicted employability. In this case, work related variables had much more importance than for job insecurity. Educational level resulted in a slight more important factor than occupational position, which stands in favour of framing the employability concept under the human capital theory. Another important antecedent for external employability was the fact if the workers had already or not another job. Finally, as we saw through the text, age overlapped with tenure in explaining employability.

Table 19. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Significant Predictors of Employability (N = 574).*

|   | Employability |         |         |
|---|---------------|---------|---------|
|   | Step 1        | Step 2  | Step 3  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>                                     | .14           | .12     | .17*    |
| Organisation B  | .27*          | .26*    | .28**   |
| Organisation C  | .11           | .09     | .09     |
| Organisation D  | .27**         | .26*    | .22*    |
| Organisation E  | .15           | .13     | .23**   |
| Organisation F  | .18**         | .16**   | .11     |
| Organisation G  | -.02          | -.02    | .01     |
| Age   |               | -.10*   | -.15*** |
| Man <sup>2</sup>  |               | -.06    | -.04    |
| Core-self evaluations   |               |         | .09*    |
| Low education <sup>3</sup>                                      |               |         | -.24*** |
| Management <sup>4</sup>   |               |         | .12**   |
| Without other job <sup>5</sup>                                  |               |         | -.09*   |
| Impression management   |               |         | .08*    |
| Perceived number of employment opportunities (ELM) <sup>6</sup> |               |         | .20***  |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>                                | .04           | .05     | .19     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>   | .05           | .06     | .21     |
| $\Delta R^2$  | .05***        | .01*    | .15***  |
| <i>F</i>  | 4.02***       | 4.02*** | 6.56*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup>Low educational level (0 = medium and high educational level; 1 = low educational level); <sup>4</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>5</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>6</sup>Responses from 1 = decrease to 3 = increase.

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE ANTECEDENTS CHAPTER**

As we have seen a common point is that there is a need to clarify the antecedents of both job insecurity and employability. Moreover, as previous findings indicate (e.g., Berntson, Sverke & Marklund, 2006; Mauno & Kinnunen, 2002) job insecurity and employability are predicted by both structural and individual variables. Results also show that they are two distinctive concepts and thus, have different antecedents or different relations with these antecedents. While personality and the perceived labour market are the most important predictors of job insecurity, work-related variables were indicated to be as major antecedents for employability. This might be because the appraisal of a situation might be more important to experience certain level of job insecurity. This will explain why certain individuals may experience job insecurity without the existence of a real threat. As regards employability, the perceived possibilities to gain new employment are strongly influenced by indicators of the worker's labour market position. It is noteworthy, that educational level appears to have a more important role in predicting employability than job insecurity. In contrast, findings indicate that occupational level might be a stronger predictor of job insecurity than for employability. It was also observed that impression management is a good predictor of employability, while it might be the case that for job insecurity this variable could be a consequence and not an antecedent. As regards to the control variables, age was negatively related with both job insecurity and employability, which might be an indicator of how tenure is associated with both variables. It could also be observed that the composition of organizations might influence variations in job insecurity and employability. As concerns to job insecurity, this could be explained by the concentration in certain organizations of low educated and blue-collar workers. There appears to be a variation as regards to organization and employability which must be studied in more detail.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONSEQUENCES ON WORK-RELATED AND GENERAL WELL-BEING**

As psychologists our interest focuses on the consequences that job insecurity and employability have for the individual, more specifically for his or her well-being. In this respect, the relationship between job insecurity and well-being has been a central and well documented research topic (for an overview, see Sverke et al., 2002; De Witte, 1999), unlike the relationship between employability and well-being. However, it is increasingly difficult to ignore employability in the context of the new labour market, which underlines the importance that flexibility and adaptability might have on workers' well-being. As a result, there have been recent attempts to understand the association between employability and well-being, especially from a subjective approach to the employability concept (e.g., Silla et al., 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Bernston & Marklund, 2007). Taking the exposed into consideration, this chapter's aim is three-fold: firstly, to replicate previous findings regarding the relationship between job insecurity and well-being in a non European context; secondly, to study employability's association with well-being; and finally, to examine the similarities and differences between our main concepts in the framework of workers' well-being. To address these aims, the present chapter starts off with the definition of well-being outcomes of job insecurity and employability included in this research. In line with Warr (1994), we considered work-related well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement comprising vigor and dedication dimensions, and burnout, specifically exhaustion and cynicism) and general well-being (i.e., psychological distress and life satisfaction). Subsequently, the chapter is divided into two sections which have a similar structure, that is, job insecurity and employability. In each section, relevant theoretical frameworks and previous findings are introduced to understand possible associations between our main concepts and the proposed well-being variables; hypotheses are elaborated. Then, these hypotheses are tested by conducting hierarchical regression analyses, and results are shown and discussed. Finally, general conclusions are established.

## 1. WORK-RELATED AND GENERAL WELL-BEING

It may be suggested that the needs covered by a job may transcend the work environment. For instance, a job contributes to build an individual's sense of self (Erikson, 1959) and personal worth, while extending social contacts beyond the family circle and providing time structure (Jahoda, 1982). Therefore, job insecurity and employability may also explain individual variations on general well-being. As a result, in the present dissertation, the impact of both job insecurity and employability is framed under Warr's (1994) distinction between context-specific and context-free well-being. Context-specific well-being corresponds in this particular case to the workplace domain (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement, exhaustion and cynicism), while the context-free level relates to the individual's life in general (i.e., psychological distress and life satisfaction).

The outcomes associated with job insecurity have been previously described in terms of its impact over time. In this sense, work-related and general well-being may have been represented by two of the quadrants established by Sverke et al. (2002) while organizing their meta-analysis of job insecurity's consequences. In line with Lazarus and Folkman (1984), they stated that stress reactions may occur immediately or in the long term. In fact, Sverke et al. (2002) classified a context specific well-being measure such as job satisfaction as an immediate reaction to job insecurity, while for instance mental health was categorized as a long term reaction. Since mental health is also associated to the absence of psychological distress, general well-being may also be considered as a long term reaction. Contrary to job insecurity, employability is not considered a stressor with immediate or long-term reactions. However, due to work's relevance for an individual's live, employability might also be expected to be associated with general well-being. In fact, our two main variables may transcend the work environment, and thus, may relate to general well-being without necessarily suggesting a spill-over effect. For instance, although burnout is a work-related well-being measure, it has also been considered a chronic reaction, that is, one that is likely to develop on the long term.

In addition to the work-related and general well-being categorization, it is interesting to include variables which put emphasis on impaired well-being (e.g., burnout and psychological distress) as well as those which focused on the optimal functioning of the employee (e.g., engagement and life satisfaction). This was done in view of the proposed tone of the relationship between our main concepts and work (see Part 3, Chapter 1); namely negative for job insecurity and positive for employability.

## **2. WELL-BEING VARIABLES: DIMENSIONS AND DEFINITIONS**

In the literature there exists a predominance of a hedonic approach to well-being, that is, affective well-being or in more colloquial terms “feeling good” (Lent & Brown, 2009). This is framed in Warr’s (1984) theory as the pleasure-displeasure dimension. Therefore, not surprisingly, our definitions of job satisfaction, career satisfaction, life satisfaction and psychological distress were built upon the affective dimension; that is, the presence or absence of pleasant or unpleasant feelings towards job, career or life in general.

Work-related well-being has been commonly studied as job satisfaction. Indeed, job satisfaction has been by far the most frequently used well-being variable in occupational psychology research. *Job satisfaction* is defined as the degree to which employees like their jobs (Spector, 1997). While the global approach has focused on the overall satisfaction with the job, the facets approach considered different job aspects such as the degree of autonomy at work. In this dissertation, the global approach was applied. This approach is the most frequently used in the literature. It was considered the most appropriate for our aims and in view of the large number of variables included in this research. The facets approach is a longer measurement which is mainly used as a diagnostic instrument for organizations. Besides, global and facets job satisfaction are highly correlated.

*Career satisfaction* is a well-being variable which is not constrained to a specific job but relates to an individual’s career development. As in the case of job satisfaction, it might be approached from a global or a facets perspective. The widely used facets approach scale from of Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) was chosen. Thus, in this dissertation, career satisfaction was defined as the degree to which an employee feels happy about specific aspects of his or her career such as achievements, wage progress and skills development.

Additionally to pleasure-displeasure, the focus also lied on a second well-being dimension, namely, enthusiasm vs. depression (Warr, 1984), measured with engagement and burnout, respectively. These well-being variables were considered appealing for understanding the relationship between job insecurity and employability. As previously discussed (Part 3, Chapter 1), job insecure workers might be more prone to relate passively with their environment because they might experience that the situation is out of their hands. Thus, this could be associated to low levels of arousal and pleasure, which might be accompanied by depression. In contrast, employable workers might perceive a sense of mastery and control over their work situation, which might promote a higher level of activity. As a result, employability might be associated with enthusiasm.

*Engagement* has been described as a positive and persistent state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). This concept originated from an increasing interest in occupational psychology to understand the psychological processes related to an individual's optimal functioning. In line with this, it has been frequently portrayed as the antipode of burnout and thus, a negative relation between both concepts is expected (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Highly engaged employees have been described as individuals who establish an enthusiastic and effective connection with their work and who perceive themselves as able to manage upcoming job demands (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). It is noteworthy that in this dissertation we will consider the two main components of engagement, that is, vigor and dedication. Vigor has been referred to experiencing high energy levels, willingness to invest effort and persistence in the face of difficulties at work. Dedication has been characterized by being strongly involved in one's job and deriving from it a sense of purpose, pride and enthusiasm. (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006; Salanova et al., 2000).

*Burnout* has been portrayed as a state of mental weariness characterized by high levels of exhaustion and cynicism, and low levels of professional efficacy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). It has been considered as a chronic state of ill-being. This concept started to be studied with employees who provided services in the health sector such as nurses. Afterwards, burnout research broaden its spectrum to include almost every occupation. In this study, we concentrated on the two most important dimensions of burnout (i.e., exhaustion and cynicism) following previous research and findings which have raised discussions about the 'adequacy' of including professional efficacy as part of the burnout concept (for more details see Methodology Chapter, Part 2). *Exhaustion* has been defined as extreme tiredness or energy drain experienced by the employee due to his or her job; while, *cynicism* has been related to a distant and indifferent attitude towards one's job (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2000).

As regards to general well-being, it included psychological distress and life satisfaction, variables which have been widely used in occupational psychology. While psychological distress puts the emphasis on the negative side of well-being, life satisfaction focuses on the positive side. In line with Goldberg (1978, 1992), *psychological distress* was defined as a general negative evaluation of oneself accompanied by non-psychiatric mental health complains such as worries, headaches and the experience of tension or fatigue.

*Life satisfaction* referred to the degree to which an individual liked his or her life. It can be assessed in relation to a particular domain of life (e.g., work, family) or in general (Diener,



Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). In this study, the facets life satisfaction approach was used.

### **3. JOB INSECURITY AND WELL-BEING**

#### **3.1. Theoretical framework**

Job insecurity has been often described as a work stressor with detrimental consequences for the employee especially as regards well-being. This relationship might be explained by theoretical frameworks which focus on: (1) occupational identity and psychological needs, (2) unpredictability and lack of control and (3) social exchange.

#### *The importance of job: occupational identity and psychological needs*

In the *Psychosocial Development Theory* (Erikson, 1959) it has been stated that individuals go through different stages along their lifetimes. Each of these stages has been characterized by different challenges or conflicts which the individual needs to face and solve. One of these stages has been named “identity vs. role confusion”, in which the individual has to answer: “who am I?”. Using Erikson’s framework, it could be stated that performing a job allows not only the development of our own capacities but as well a more realistic and in depth way of knowing ourselves, our resources and limitations. As discussed previously by Sverke et al. (2004), the resolution of the “identity vs. role confusion” conflict might take place as well in the work domain and thus, would also result in an “occupational identity”. For instance, identifying oneself as employed or as unemployed. It is also suggested by Sverke et al. (2004) that the successful resolution of this conflict would be accompanied by a pleasant feeling. Therefore, it could be argued that the individual who has achieved an occupational identity will be prone to experience well-being. Following the exposed, it might be expected that job insecurity would hinder a successful conflict resolution by contributing to role confusion. After all, the sense of insecurity builds up on a ‘grey line’ between being employed or unemployed (De Witte, 1999). Consequently, it might be expected that job insecurity will be negatively associated with work-related well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction and engagement) and positively to exhaustion and cynicism. More specifically, the unsolved identity role that accompanies job insecurity might cause feelings of displeasure regarding the present job (job satisfaction) and the development of the own career path (career satisfaction), as well as hinder the employee’s enthusiastic and effective connection to the present job (engagement), which will be accompanied by extreme tiredness (exhaustion) and an indifferent attitude towards the present job (cynicism).

According to Erikson (1959), the resolution or not of a psychosocial conflict affects a person's vital development. If we also consider that an individual's occupational identity contributes to shape his or her whole identity, it might be expected that those who do not resolve this stage conflict, like for instance the job insecure, will be more likely to experience life dissatisfaction and psychological distress. These last assumptions could also be expected in the framework of the *Latent Deprivation Theory* (Jahoda, 1982). This theory's basic statement is that work does not only provide for manifest needs (e.g., salary) but also for latent ones such as a time structure or social contacts outside of the family. In this sense, work fulfils a relevant role in an individual's life. Thus, the perceived possibility and fear of loosing the job might endanger an individual's need fulfilment, originating frustration and impaired well-being. Since the importance of job as such transcends the work barriers and gives significance to one's live, it might be expected that job insecurity might be detrimental as well for general well-being.

*Stress perspective: unpredictability and lack of control*

In the context of stress theories, perceived unpredictability and lack of control (Furda & Meijman, 1992) are concepts which have been previously discussed as key elements not only to understand job insecurity's nature but as well its detrimental impact on well-being (e.g., De Witte, 2005; Sverke et al., 2004). The main argument is that job insecurity implies a perceived uncertain situation regarding the fate of the present job. This hinders the worker's possibilities to foresee or predict the future. Thus, the employee might experience limitations about which reactions to take in order to solve an unclear situation. Subsequently, this plays against his or her attempts of regaining control. Furthermore, job insecurity is also accompanied by feelings of uncontrollability because it is a situation that the employee did not choose for (Sverke et al., 2002; De Witte 1999; Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt 1984). To sum up, the lack of control experienced by a job insecure employee might trigger feelings of unrest and displeasure. Some theories which contributed to understand this in more detail were the Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and Warr's Vitamin Model (1994).

In the framework of the *Appraisal Theory* (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), stress has been described as the outcome of two evaluation processes. During the primary process the individual attributes significance to the situation, anticipating if it could become harmful or not. An employee who gives a negative meaning to an eventual job loss will be most likely to experience job insecurity. During the secondary process, the individual appraises the extent to which he or she will be able to deal with the situation. If the individual perceives that he or

she is not able to cope with the job loss situation, that is, to have control over it, then he or she will most likely experience stress. In fact, job insecurity is also characterized by a perceived lack of control due to the fact that the employee is involuntarily involved in such situation. Thus, he or she will be prone to experience negative feelings and lower well-being. Moreover, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) the span of the uncertainty will also affect the individual's effectiveness in generating coping strategies. That is, the longer the uncertainty, the more detrimental effects on well-being. For instance, the costs of a prolonged exposure to stress might also be associated with burnout and psychosomatic complaints (Demerouti et al., 2001).

As regards *Warr's Vitamin Model* (1992), he defined nine environmental features that in general terms, needed to be present in order to enhance an employee's well-being. In this context, 'environmental clarity' and 'opportunity of control' are categories that deserve special attention. 'Environmental clarity' refers to the degree of clarity and predictability offered by the context with respect to the expectations and consequences of specific behaviours. In this sense, job insecurity has been portrayed in literature as an unpredictable situation in which it is unclear if the employee will lose or not his or her job. 'Opportunity of control' has been described as the extent to which the situation offers possibilities to decide which activities to perform. In this respect, job insecurity may relate to the absence of 'opportunity for control', owing to the association between job insecurity, helplessness and lack of control (De Witte, 2005). It follows then, that job insecurity is likely to cause impaired well-being because the employee does not have a clear view on the future of the job nor how to act (absence of 'environmental clarity') and feels powerless to change what he or she is going through (lack of 'opportunity of control'). An employee could even regain both environmental features after actually losing the job, which does not occur while job insecurity persists. Indeed, this reasoning might be supported by earlier research indicating that job insecurity is more detrimental for well-being than the certainty of dismissal (Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995).

Furthermore, recently Vander Elst et al. (*WAOP*, 2008) using confirmatory factor analysis determined that perceived control is actually a separate construct from the job insecurity concept. This study provides empirical evidence that job insecurity might be stressful or have detrimental consequences on an individual's job satisfaction and psychological well-being because it decreases an individual's perceived control. Thus, these findings support our arguments established in the framework of both the Appraisal Theory and the Vitamin Model, supporting our arguments.

### *Social exchange*

In the framework of social exchange it could be stated that the frequent interplay between a worker and his or her organization develops into a relationship with explicit as well as implicit agreements. Thus, this relationship is based not only upon an obvious economic exchange (e.g., salary) but also involves social exchanges (e.g., job security) which might have been assumed only by one of the parties as an agreement without the knowledge of the other one. A successful and satisfying relationship is considered as such only if there is a perceived positive balance between its costs and benefits. Some theories which help us to explain this more clearly are the Effort-reward Imbalance Model (Siegrist, 1996) and Psychological Contract.

*The Effort-Reward Imbalance Model (Siegrist, 1996)* has been built upon the premise that employees are willing to put in effort in their job activities as long as they perceive that they get an even reward in return. Some important rewards in this model are: salary, self-esteem and secure employment. This last reward is particularly interesting for explaining job insecurity's detrimental effects on well-being (Sverke et al., 2004). Job insecurity would imply a failed reciprocity regarding secure employment. Additionally, this imbalance may be perceived by the worker as a loss of control (i.e., the employee's sense of self-regulation, mastery and self-esteem) and thus, this worker will be prone to experience negative emotions such as fear or rage (Sverke et al., 2004). As a result, an association between job insecurity and impaired well-being may be expected. Furthermore, De Witte (1999) stated that this perceived loss of control may also be seen as a threat to an individual's employment status; thus, resulting in impaired well-being distress.

*The psychological contract* has been defined as the set of beliefs that workers hold regarding their employment relationship (Rousseau, 1995, in Rousseau, 1997). It is based on promises which express themselves in the form of expectations and obligations. Similarly to the Effort-reward Imbalance Model, "employees agree to make specific contributions to an organization in return for benefits from the employer" (Nicholson & Johns, 1989, in Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994). Psychological contracts have been described as schemas shaped by pre-employment experiences and feedback from the working environment. Overtime they tend to be more accurate regarding the workplace and also relatively stable. Therefore, they turn to be resistant to change (Rousseau, 2001).

Robinson, Kraatz, and Rousseau (1994) applied MacNeil's (1985) contract classification to psychological contracts which contributed to understand the consequences of perceived contract violations (i.e., perceived failure to fulfil a promise). It was stated that

psychological contracts may involve varying levels of both transactional and relational exchange. Thus, transactional and relational exchanges may not exclusively be seen as two opposing types of agreements but also as elements which may be present in a single psychological contract (Millward & Herriot, 2000). This means that in addition to “a fair day's work for a fair day's pay” (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998, page 399), most employees expect to receive training opportunities, career development and job security in return for loyalty. Consequently, job insecurity may be perceived as a major breach of contract by the individual (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2007, 2006). Since violations may generate intense negative attitudinal and emotional responses such as anger, frustration and betrayal (Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson and Morrison, 1995; Robinson & Rousseau 1994), it is likely that these feelings may lead to poor well-being.

### **3.2. Empirical evidence**

Research has consistently established a relationship between job insecurity and poor well-being (for reviews, see De Witte, 2005, 1999; Sverke et al., 2002). Longitudinal research has shown that this relationship can be interpreted in a causal way: that is, job insecurity is likely to cause poor well-being rather than the other way around (Hellgren & Sverke, 2002). Earlier research has shown that job insecurity relates to job dissatisfaction (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Rosenblatt, Talmud, & Ruvio, 1999), burnout (De Witte, 2000; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995), impaired psychological well-being (Silla et al., 2008; Hellgren et al., 1999; Büssing 1999) and life dissatisfaction (Silla et al., 2008; Lim, 1997). With some exceptions like De Cuyper and De Witte (2005) there are not so many studies that probed the negative relationship between job insecurity and engagement. Additionally, findings also have shown a negative relation with psychosomatic complaints (e.g., Landsbergis, 1988).

In conclusion, based upon the presented theoretical frameworks and earlier empirical evidence, we are inclined to formulate the following:

*Hypothesis 26: Job insecurity relates negatively to job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement and life satisfaction, and positively to burnout and psychological distress.*

## 4. EMPLOYABILITY AND WELL-BEING

### 4.1. Theoretical framework

Employability has been portrayed in literature as advantageous for employees because it enhances their flexibility in the labour market place (Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006; Fugate et al., 2004) and allows them to use all their capacities and to achieve self-realization (De Vries, Gründemann & Van Vuuren, 2001). Since employability has been related in literature to an individual's optimal functioning, a positive association with well-being might be expected. In the present section, this relationship has been explained using theoretical frameworks which focus on: (1) work identity, (2) sense of control and (3) personal growth.

#### *The importance of work: work identity and psychological needs*

Extending our previous discussion on the “identity vs. role confusion” stage described in the *Psychosocial Development Theory* (Erikson, 1959), or more specifically an individual's occupational identity, it could be suggested that employability might indeed help to solve this conflict and thus, be associated to well-being. Regarding this issue, two mechanisms might be suggested. Firstly, to answer the question “who am I?” the individual must undergo a process of self-discovery which will contribute to gain an in-depth knowledge of his or her own capacities and limitations. The consciousness over one's resources might include as well a better knowledge of one's own possibilities to gain a job. Secondly, if the individual has an initial clear sense of his or her own employability, this would in fact contribute to build up the individual's occupational identity. The bottom line is that the proposed mechanisms imply that employability might contribute to define an individual's occupational identity and vice versa. Since employable workers perceive themselves as able to gain another job, they might be prone to keep their occupational identity intact even in front of a changing situation, that is, to see themselves as employed no matter the odds. This would go in line with Forrierier and Sels (2003) conceptualization of a “lifetime employability” or job security which surpasses organizational barriers. Considering that the adequate solution of the occupational identity conflict will be accompanied by pleasant emotions, a positive relationship between employability and work-related well-being might be expected. Interestingly, this framework may surpass the affective dimension of well-being as solving the stage conflict implies a better knowledge of one's capacities and abilities. Thus, other elements of well-being such as sense of competence and integrated functioning may be present (Warr, 1984). For instance, since the common element of all employability's definitions is the perceived possibilities to make job transitions (De Cuyper et al., 2008), it might be assumed that the sense of

competence would be linked to employability. The association of employability to integrated functioning might be reflected in some portrayals of the concept such as Fugate et al. (2004) identification of the proactive nature of employability, and its contribution to enhance the individual's constant adaption to a changing labour market.

In the same way as employability helps to give shape to an individual's occupational identity, it might also influence other work identity domains such as for example career identity. This is described by Fugate et al. (2004) as fundamental for the individual to answer to "who I am or want to be" in the career context. The answer to such questions may help the individual to realize transition opportunities and thus, may be associated to a sense of control over the labour market. This sense of control, as we will see further has been traditionally associated with well-being (Silla et al., 2009).

Since occupational and career identities are domains of the individual's global identity, it might also be expected that employability would impact general well-being too. The influence of employability on general well-being, as in the case of job insecurity, might be explained using the *Latent Deprivation Theory* (Jahoda, 1982). Since employability is related to the perceived possibilities to gain another job, the fulfilment of not only manifest but also latent needs covered by work, are less jeopardized, thus, promoting the employee's general well-being.

To sum up, it could be concluded that employability's contribution to solve an individual's identity might cause well-being regarding the present job (job satisfaction), achievements of the own career path (career satisfaction) and life in general (life satisfaction), as well as enhancing the employee's enthusiastic and effective connection to the present job (engagement). As a way of contrast, employability might prevent the individual from experiencing extreme tiredness (exhaustion), indifference towards the present job (cynicism) or presenting health complaints (psychological distress).

### *Sense of control*

Employability might be seen as a resource which enhances workers' sense of control, thus, stimulating their well-being. In fact, employability has been portrayed in the literature as instrument through which the employee may gain control over the work environment (Silla et al., 2008; Berntson & Marklund 2006). Some theories which might contribute in explaining this point of view are the Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and the Vitamin Model (Warr, 1994).

According to the *Appraisal Theory* (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) individuals behave in line with their evaluation of an event. As previously discussed (see Part 3, Chapter 1), it might be expected that employable workers view changes in the workplace as a challenge instead of a threat (primary appraisal) and that they would perceive themselves as being able to cope with the situation by getting another job (secondary appraisal). Regarding the primary appraisal, perceiving the situation as a challenge would help to turn it into a beneficial event. Indeed, it might be identified as a growth opportunity in the external labour market such as getting another job or expanding one's career. In relation to the secondary appraisal, the identification of the situation as positive for the worker, will allow him or her to establish a clear plan of action for grabbing this work opportunity. This will allow the employee to evaluate his or her chances to gain a job. Employable workers will perceive themselves as able to cope with this situation and therefore, will be prone to experience well-being.

*Warr's Vitamin Model* (1994) is focused on the environment, however, much in line with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) stress and coping theory, the importance of an individual's appraisal of a particular situation is recognized. The Vitamin Model was initially developed to indicate the characteristics of a good and bad job, and later on to explain the detrimental consequences of unemployment (e.g., Paul & Moser, 2009). However, for the purpose of this research this model might also be useful to explain an individual's interplay with the external labour market. Taking into consideration that employability is sometimes viewed as an alternative to job security (Forrier & Sels, 2003), there are two environmental characteristics that result of particular interest: 'environmental clarity' and 'opportunity of control'. Contrary to what it has been explained regarding job insecurity, employability may contribute to increase both characteristics and as a result, favour workers' well-being.

Environmental clarity is associated to perceiving clear feedback for one's own actions. Much in line with Lazarus and Folkman's cognitive appraisal of a situation, a highly employable worker may perceive a changing work situation as a growth opportunity. In fact, the proactive nature associated with employability has been closely linked to an individual's realization of career opportunities, optimism and openness to change (Fugate et al, 2004). Characteristics such as the realization of career opportunities may help to have a clear view of his transition possibilities in the external labour market, and how to act in order to get them. This would be supported by empirical evidence showing that organizational changes will predict job insecurity in less employable workers (Berntson et al., 2007, in De Cuyper et al., 2008).



Employability is commonly associated with the idea that the worker perceives himself or herself as able to remain flexible and to adapt proactively to the changing conditions of the labour market (Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006; Fugate et al., 2004). Thus, it might be related to a sense of mastery or control over his or her own career which may generate well-being (Silla et al., 2008). Employability might contribute to “opportunity for control” allowing the employee to take decisions over the development of his or her own career, rather than limiting himself to the options offered by his or her present employer. In fact, employability has been suggested to relate to perceived prospects of alternative employment (Berntson, Bernhard-Oettel, & De Cuyper, 2007; Berntson & Marklund, 2007; Berntson et al., 2006). This might increase his or her probabilities of gaining control over a changing situation and to cope with eventual job dissatisfaction; highly employable workers may perceive more job alternatives and thus, may be prevented to experience the locked-in-phenomenon (Aronsson & Göransson, 1999; De Cuyper et al. 2008). The environmental feature “opportunity for control” could also be related to the core element of employability, that is, “gaining”. This marks a different approach to the job than in the case of job insecurity. While “loosing” may relate to passive behaviour, “gaining” relates to active behaviour.

### *Personal growth*

Employability is mainly seen in literature as a positive concept not only because it allows individuals to gain flexibility to manage unpredictable changes in the labour market (Bernston, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006) or gain a new kind of job security (Forrier & Sels, 2003), but also because it contributes to achieve self-realization through the development of their capacities (De Vries, Gründemann, & Van Vuuren, 2001). Two theories which may help us to explain the suggested link between employability and personal growth are the Job-demand-resource model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) and Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

*The Job-demand-resource Model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001)* is particularly interesting in the case of employability because it focuses also on positive outcomes, that is, well-being, extending the previous model of Karasek’s Demand-Control (1979). The basic premise of the JD-R model is that jobs present physical, psychological, social and organizational aspects. These aspects become demands when requiring a sustained physical or psychological effort from the employee such as role ambiguity or high work pressure. These demands turn into stressors when the individual does not recover completely from the invested high effort, thus, leading him or her to burnout. Additionally, job

characteristics may turn into resources which not only buffer the effects of work demands but also have a value per se by contributing to accomplish work goals, decreasing the invested effort or enhancing personal growth (Silla et al., 2008; Bakker & Demerouti, 2006; Hakanen et al. 2005). As a result, job demands give shape to a motivational process with outcomes such as engagement.

A recent research line has included personal resources such as self-efficacy, organizational-based self-esteem and optimism in the JD-R model (e.g., Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2006). Interestingly, as previously suggested (see Chapter on Antecedents) self-efficacy, self-esteem and optimism may be positively related to employability. Extending the JD-R model, employability may be approached as a personal resource, as it may help the individual to achieve labour market opportunities for skill utilization and development, and thus, for personal growth. Moreover, job changes have been highlighted as a factor contributing to personal growth and learning opportunities (Silla et al., 2008). Thus, employability might be particularly important in predicting engagement. Since burnout is portrayed as the antipode for engagement, it might be expected that employability will have a negative relation to burnout. To sum up, it might be expected that employability relates positively to well-being.

*Self-determination Theory* (Deci & Ryan, 2000) builds up on the conception that individuals are growth orientated, seeking constantly for knowledge and challenges which are then meaningfully organized (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, & De Witte, 2008). This growth orientation is the product of three basic and universal psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The last one is of particular interest for the present dissertation. It refers to the need of perceiving oneself as able to cope with the environment and to achieve the desired outcomes (Van den Broeck et al., 2008). Interestingly, the competence need drives individuals to skill development and to adaptation to a changing environment (Van den Broeck et al., 2008), much in line with some of the characteristics earlier discussed regarding the nature of employability. Since being employable offers the possibility of fulfilling the competence need and thus, contributes with the experience of self-regulation, it might be expected that highly employable workers experience well-being.

## **4.2. Empirical evidence**

There are few studies on the relationship between employability and well-being. However, recent studies show that employability relates positively to engagement and life

satisfaction (De Cuyper et al., 2008), general health and mental well-being (Berntson, 2008; Berntson & Marklund, 2006).

Based upon theoretical frameworks and earlier empirical evidence, we are inclined to formulate the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 27: Employability relates positively to job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement and life satisfaction, and negatively to burnout and psychological distress.*

## **5. RESULTS**

### **5.1. Analyses**

Hierarchical regression analyses were applied separately for each of the well-being variables. The first and second steps were the same as in Chapter 2. In the first step, organisations were controlled for by coding this variable into 7 dummy variables with organisation H, that is, the smallest one, as the reference group. This was done considering previous findings that organizational membership influenced job insecurity (Kinnunen, Mauno, Natti, & Happonen, 2000) and employability (Wittekind, Bernard, Geuber, & Staffebach, 2006). Additionally, organizational membership might partly explain the variation in psychological well-being (van Mierlo, Rutte, Vermunt, Kompier & Doorewaard, 2007).

In the second step, age and gender were controlled for which is typically done in both job insecurity and employability research (Sverke et al., 2004; Forrier & Sels, 2003). Indeed, earlier research indicated that some demographic groups might be more prone not only to experience job insecurity (Sverke et al., 2004) and employability (Bernston et al., 2006), but also well-being (Roxburgh, 1997). As regards the third step, it was decided to control for variables which denote the interplay of the individual with the work (i.e., occupational position, type of contract, additional job) and the family environment (i.e., family status, financial contribution to the household and number of dependents). For instance, it has been shown that characteristics such as type of contract might influence an individual's job satisfaction (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004). Moreover, psychological distress may be influenced by the constraints or resources originated from variables related to the family environment such as marital status or number of children (Marchand, Demers, & Durand, 2004).

Finally, in the fourth step, job insecurity and employability were introduced to determine their possible effects on each of the considered well-being variables, as well as the

strength of these associations. Analyses were performed using listwise deletion. As a result and due to the large number of variables included in the analyses, the sample size was reduced varying from 536 (psychological distress) to 554 (life satisfaction) workers.

## 5.2. Results for job insecurity

As Table 20 shows (see next page; fourth step of the analysis), job insecurity has a fairly strong association with poor job satisfaction ( $\beta = -.20, p \leq .001$ ): job insecurity explained an extra 4% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. When job insecurity is introduced in the last step of the hierarchical regression analysis, none of the other variables were significantly related to job satisfaction. These results go in line with hypothesis 26, indicating that job insecurity is negatively associated with job satisfaction. These findings were confirmed by preliminary results which showed a significant negative correlation between both variables ( $r = -.25, p \leq .01$ ). (See Part 2 - Methodology Chapter). Results show that it is a good model accounting for 13% of the explained variance,  $F(19,551) = 4.18, p \leq .001$ .

In contrast to hypothesis 26, the present results did not show a significant association between job insecurity and career satisfaction (see Table 21, page 156). This finding differs from preliminary results which indicated a significant negative correlation between both variables ( $r = -.16, p \leq .001$ ). However, the analysis of variance establishes that the chosen variables are good predictors of career satisfaction adding up to 16% of the explained variance,  $F(19,545) = 5.26, p \leq .001$ . As may be observed, organisations F and G as compared to all other organizations, age, family status and employability presented a significant positive relation with career satisfaction.

In view of exploring these rather unexpected findings, we checked whether results would have been different if variables which denote the interplay of the individual with the work (i.e., occupational position, type of contract, additional job) and the family environment (i.e., family status, financial contribution to the household and number of dependents) would not have been included as control variables.

Table 20. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as Predictors of Job Satisfaction (N =551).*

|                                    | Job Satisfaction |        |        |         |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------|--------|---------|
|                                    | Step 1           | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | -.15             | -.12   | -.14   | -.12    |
| Organisation B                     | -.20             | -.17   | -.19   | -.14    |
| Organisation C                     | -.05             | -.03   | -.03   | -.01    |
| Organisation D                     | -.17             | -.14   | -.13   | -.10    |
| Organisation E                     | -.23**           | -.17*  | -.19** | -.14    |
| Organisation F                     | -.08             | -.06   | -.06   | -.04    |
| Organisation G                     | .04              | .04    | .03    | .03     |
| Age                                |                  | .16*** | .10*   | .07     |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                  | -.02   | -.06   | -.06    |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                  |        | .09    | .08     |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                  |        | .06    | .06     |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                  |        | .03    | .00     |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                  |        | .06    | .04     |
| Working hours/w                    |                  |        | -.01   | -.00    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                  |        | .08    | .09     |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                  |        | -.06   | -.06    |
| Dependents                         |                  |        | .01    | .01     |
| Job insecurity                     |                  |        |        | -.20*** |
| Employability                      |                  |        |        | -.06    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .04              | .06    | .06    | .10     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .05              | .07    | .09    | .13     |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .05***           | .03*** | .02    | .04***  |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup> Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)  
 \* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

Table 21. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as Predictors of Career Satisfaction (N =545).*

|                                    | Career Satisfaction |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                    | Step 1              | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | -.03                | .00    | .06    | .05    |
| Organisation B                     | .01                 | .04    | .10    | .08    |
| Organisation C                     | .04                 | .05    | .07    | .07    |
| Organisation D                     | .13                 | .15    | .19    | .16    |
| Organisation E                     | -.06                | .00    | .08    | .07    |
| Organisation F                     | .14*                | .15*   | .16*   | .15*   |
| Organisation G                     | .16*                | .16*   | .19*   | .18*   |
| Age                                |                     | .20*** | .12**  | .14**  |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                     | -.03   | .00    | .00    |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                     |        | .07*   | .04    |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                     |        | -.13   | -.10   |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                     |        | .04    | .03    |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                     |        | .06    | .07    |
| Working hours/w                    |                     |        | -.05   | -.05   |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                     |        | .10*   | .09*   |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                     |        | -.03   | -.02   |
| Dependents                         |                     |        | -.03   | -.03   |
| Job insecurity                     |                     |        |        | -.08   |
| Employability                      |                     |        |        | .14*** |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .05                 | .08    | .11    | .13    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .06                 | .10    | .13    | .16    |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .06***              | .04*** | .04**  | .03*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup> Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)  
 \* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

A hierarchical regression analysis (not shown in this dissertation) was applied with both job insecurity and employability (step 3) as independent variables and career satisfaction as the outcome, and with organizations (step 1), age and gender (step 2) as control variables. These additional results showed a negative association between job insecurity and career satisfaction ( $\beta = -.20, p \leq .001$ ). This would indicate that once specific control variables (i.e., interplay with the work environment and with the family environment) are introduced in the analysis, job insecurity's relation with career satisfaction diminishes to non significance. Moreover, these findings might point out that job insecurity has a stronger relation to job satisfaction than to career satisfaction. In this same line, it might be suggested that career satisfaction will have a stronger association with some organizational career policies or to workers perceived possibilities to make transitions, rather than to variables which are more related to the job as such, as is the case for job insecurity. For instance, as regards age, it might be possible that older employees may feel more at ease with what they have achieved so far in a probably long-term career, than younger employees who may still have career goals to fulfil. Another explanation for the unexpected results, might lie on the way in which career satisfaction was measured, that is, according to achievements in different career domains. These findings will be discussed in the general conclusions.

As predicted in hypothesis 26, job insecurity has a significant negative association with engagement ( $\beta -.11, p \leq .001$ ; see Table 22, next page): job insecurity explained an extra 1% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. These findings were supported by the preliminary results ( $r = -.13, p \leq .001$ ). As shown in Table 22, age, without another job and number of dependents have a positive relation to engagement; while organisations A and F as compared to all other organizations have a negative association with engagement. Results also indicate that it is a good model accounting for 14% of the explained variance,  $F(19,552) = 4.38, p \leq .001$ .

Table 22. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as predictors of Engagement (N =552).*

|                                    | Engagement |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                    | Step 1     | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | -.21*      | -.18*  | -.20*  | -.20*  |
| Organisation B                     | -.21       | -.19   | -.25*  | -.24   |
| Organisation C                     | .00        | .03    | .01    | .02    |
| Organisation D                     | -.21       | -.19   | -.21   | -.21   |
| Organisation E                     | -.24**     | -.20*  | -.23** | -.21*  |
| Organisation F                     | -.19**     | -.17** | -.16** | -.17** |
| Organisation G                     | -.02       | -.02   | -.04   | -.04   |
| Age                                |            | .16*** | .12**  | .12*   |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |            | .05    | .01    | .01    |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |            |        | .05    | .03    |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |            |        | .04    | .05    |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |            |        | -.04   | -.05   |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |            |        | .10*   | .09*   |
| Working hours/w                    |            |        | .01    | .01    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |            |        | .06    | .06    |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |            |        | -.04*  | -.04   |
| Dependents                         |            |        | .10    | .10*   |
| Job insecurity                     |            |        |        | -.11** |
| Employability                      |            |        |        | .03    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .05        | .08    | .10    | .10    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .07        | .09    | .12    | .14    |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .07***     | .03*** | .03*   | .01*   |

<sup>1</sup>Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)  
p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001



As Table 23 shows (see next page), job insecurity relates positively to exhaustion ( $\beta .26$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ): job insecurity explained an extra 6% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. These results align with hypothesis 26. Besides, they were supported by preliminary results ( $r = .28$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). In addition to job insecurity, only working hours added significantly to the explained variance. Results indicate that it is a good model accounting for 13% of the explained variance,  $F(19,552) = 4.07$ ,  $p \leq .001$ .

In line with hypothesis 26, job insecurity has a significant positive association with cynicism ( $\beta .29$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ; see Table 24, page 161), adding up together with employability an extra 10% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. These findings were supported by preliminary results, which showed that job insecurity had a significant positive correlation with cynicism ( $r = .34$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). In addition, only organization C as compared to all other organizations, contributed to the explained variance. Results indicate that it is a good model accounting for 21% of the explained variance,  $F(19,552) = 7.65$ ,  $p \leq .001$ .

As Table 25 shows (see page 162), job insecurity was a fairly strong predictor of psychological distress ( $\beta -.29$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ): job insecurity explained an extra 7% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. When job insecurity is introduced in the last step of the hierarchical regression analysis, none of the other variables were significantly related to job satisfaction. These results align with hypothesis x, indicating that job insecurity is positively associated with psychological distress. These findings were supported by preliminary results ( $r = .32$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). Results show that it is a good model accounting for 16% of the explained variance,  $F(19,536) = 5.34$ ,  $p \leq .001$ .

As predicted in hypothesis 26, job insecurity has a significant negative association with life satisfaction ( $\beta -.18$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ; see Table 26, page 163): job insecurity explained an extra 3% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. These findings were supported by preliminary results ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ). Organization F as compared to all other organizations and family status also contributed with the explained variance. Results also indicate that it is a good model accounting for 14% of the explained variance,  $F(19,554) = 3.02$ ,  $p \leq .001$ .

Table 23. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as predictors of Burnout-exhaustion (N =552.)*

|                                    | Burnout-exhaustion |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                    | Step 1             | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | .25**              | .24**  | .17    | .14    |
| Organisation B                     | .25*               | .23    | .18    | .12    |
| Organisation C                     | .05                | .04    | .02    | -.01   |
| Organisation D                     | .22*               | .20    | .19    | .16    |
| Organisation E                     | .20*               | .16    | .11    | .06    |
| Organisation F                     | .08                | .07    | .07    | .06    |
| Organisation G                     | .07                | .07    | .05    | .05    |
| Age                                |                    | -.10*  | -.09   | -.06   |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                    | -.01   | -.05   | -.06   |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                    |        | -.03   | -.00   |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                    |        | .07    | .06    |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                    |        | .01    | .04    |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                    |        | -.07   | -.05   |
| Working hours/w                    |                    |        | .12**  | .12*   |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                    |        | -.02   | -.03   |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                    |        | -.02   | -.02   |
| Dependents                         |                    |        | .02    | .02    |
| Job insecurity                     |                    |        |        | .26*** |
| Employability                      |                    |        |        | .03    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .02                | .03    | .04    | .10    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .04                | .05    | .07    | .13    |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .04**              | .01    | .03    | .06*** |

<sup>1</sup>Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup>Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Table 24. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as predictors of Burnout-cynicism (N = 552)*

|                                    | Burnout-cynicism |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                    | Step 1           | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | -.05             | -.07   | -.09   | -.15   |
| Organisation B                     | .02              | -.01   | -.01   | -.12   |
| Organisation C                     | -.11             | -.12   | -.12   | -.18*  |
| Organisation D                     | -.00             | -.02   | -.02   | -.09   |
| Organisation E                     | .23**            | .19*   | .19**  | .10    |
| Organisation F                     | .02              | .01    | .02    | -.01   |
| Organisation G                     | -.12             | -.12   | -.11   | -.13   |
| Age                                |                  | -.12** | -.10   | -.03   |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                  | -.00   | .00    | -.00   |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                  |        | -.08   | -.07   |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                  |        | -.03   | -.02   |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                  |        | .01    | .04    |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                  |        | -.04   | .00    |
| Working hours/w                    |                  |        | .07    | .05    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                  |        | .04    | .01    |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                  |        | .03    | .03    |
| Dependents                         |                  |        | -.05   | -.04   |
| Job insecurity                     |                  |        |        | .29*** |
| Employability                      |                  |        |        | .20*** |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .08              | .09    | .09    | .19    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .09              | .10    | .12    | .21    |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .09***           | .01*   | .01    | .10*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man);

<sup>3</sup>Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup>Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup>Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup>Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup>Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup>Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\* p ≤ .05; \*\* p ≤ .01; \*\*\*p ≤ .001

Table 25. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as predictors of Psychological Distress (N = 536).*

|                                    | Psychological distress |        |        |        |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                    | Step 1                 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | .10                    | .08    | .03    | -.00   |
| Organisation B                     | .06                    | .04    | -.02   | -.09   |
| Organisation C                     | .02                    | .01    | -.02   | -.06   |
| Organisation D                     | .06                    | .04    | .01    | -.03   |
| Organisation E                     | .24**                  | .21*   | .15    | .09    |
| Organisation F                     | .09                    | .08    | .08    | .07    |
| Organisation G                     | -.06                   | -.06   | -.08   | -.08   |
| Age                                |                        | -.11** | -.09   | -.04   |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                        | -.01   | -.04   | -.05   |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                        |        | -.04   | -.01   |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                        |        | .06    | .05    |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                        |        | -.05   | -.02   |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                        |        | -.00   | .02    |
| Working hours/w                    |                        |        | .09    | .07    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                        |        | -.01   | -.03   |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                        |        | -.00   | -.00   |
| Dependents                         |                        |        | .06    | .07    |
| Job insecurity                     |                        |        |        | .29*** |
| Employability                      |                        |        |        | .05    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .05                    | .06    | .06    | .13    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .06                    | .07    | .09    | .16    |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .06***                 | .01*   | .02    | .07*** |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup> Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup> Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup> Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup> Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup> Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup> Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Table 26. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis: Job Insecurity and Employability as predictors of Life Satisfaction (N =554).*

|                                    | Life satisfaction |        |        |         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|---------|
|                                    | Step 1            | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4  |
| Organisation A <sup>1</sup>        | -.21**            | -.20*  | -.18*  | -.16    |
| Organisation B                     | -.24*             | -.23   | -.22   | -.18    |
| Organisation C                     | -.10              | -.09   | -.08   | -.06    |
| Organisation D                     | -.20              | -.19   | -.19   | -.16    |
| Organisation E                     | -.13              | -.11   | -.10   | -.07    |
| Organisation F                     | -.20**            | -.20** | -.19** | -.19**  |
| Organisation G                     | .00               | .00    | -.00   | -.00    |
| Age                                |                   | .06    | .04    | .02     |
| Man <sup>2</sup>                   |                   | -.01   | -.00   | .00     |
| Management <sup>3</sup>            |                   |        | -.02   | -.04    |
| Blue-collar <sup>4</sup>           |                   |        | -.00   | .01     |
| Permanent <sup>5</sup>             |                   |        | .00    | -.02    |
| Without other job <sup>6</sup>     |                   |        | .03    | .01     |
| Working hours/w                    |                   |        | -.09*  | -.09    |
| Married or cohabiting <sup>7</sup> |                   |        | .12**  | .13**   |
| Contributory earner <sup>8</sup>   |                   |        | .04    | .04     |
| Dependents                         |                   |        | -.07   | -.07    |
| Job insecurity                     |                   |        |        | -.18*** |
| Employability                      |                   |        |        | -.03    |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> <i>adj</i>   | .03               | .03    | .04    | .07     |
| <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>              | .05               | .05    | .07    | .10     |
| $\Delta R^2$                       | .05***            | .00    | .02    | .03***  |

<sup>1</sup> Organization A (0 = organization B, C, D, E, F, G and H; 1 = organization A); <sup>2</sup> Gender (0 = woman; 1 = man); <sup>3</sup> Managers (0 = blue collar workers and white collar workers; 1 = managers); <sup>4</sup> Blue collar workers (0 = white collar workers and managers; 1 = blue collar workers); <sup>5</sup> Type of contract (0 = temporary worker; 1 = permanent worker); <sup>6</sup> Additional job (0 = yes; 1 = no); <sup>7</sup> Family status (0 = single; 1 = married or cohabiting); <sup>8</sup> Financial contribution to the household (0 = sole or main earner - more than 50%; 1 = contributory earner - 50% or less)

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

### 5.3. Results for employability

Contrary to hypothesize 27, employability was not significantly associated with job satisfaction when accounting for the control variables (see Table 21, page 156). In view of exploring this unexpected finding, firstly, we examined the preliminary results which surprisingly indicated that employability and job satisfaction were negatively correlated ( $r = .10, p \leq .01$ ). Secondly, we checked whether results would have been different if variables which denote the interplay of the individual with the work and the family environment would not have been included as control variables. Thus, an additional hierarchical regression analysis (not shown in this dissertation) was applied with both job insecurity and employability (step 3) as independent variables and job satisfaction as the outcome; with organizations (step 1), age and gender (step 2) as control variables. In contrast to hypothesis 27, results showed that employability had a significant negative association with job satisfaction ( $\beta = -.09, p \leq .05$ ) explaining together with job insecurity an extra 4% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. In addition, only age contributed to the explained variance. These results may have two major implications. Firstly, that employability's association with job satisfaction diminishes to non significance once work and family related variables are introduced. Secondly, in contrast to hypothesis 27, the nature of this relationship would be negative. To frame these results in a more holistic way, it is necessary first to take a look at Table 22 (page 157). This table indicates that employability has a fairly strong association with career satisfaction ( $\beta = -.14, p \leq .001$ ): employability explained an extra 2% of the variance, on top of the variance explained by the control variables. These results align with hypothesis 27, pointing out that employability is positively related to career satisfaction. This finding was supported by preliminary results where employability showed a significant positive correlation with career satisfaction ( $r = .17, p \leq .01$ ).

The unexpected findings and the results observed in Tables 21 and 22 as well as the before mentioned preliminary and three-stepped hierarchical regression analyses, suggest two important issues about employability. Firstly, employability might have a stronger association with career satisfaction than with job satisfaction. After all, employability is related to the perceived possibilities of making a job transition which would be more linked to building up a career rather than to the present job or its characteristics. Thus, when variables which are more linked to the job as such are introduced in the analyses like job insecurity (e.g., interplay with the work environment), the influence of employability over job satisfaction will diminish. Secondly, in contrast to hypothesis 27, employability might indeed be negatively

related to job satisfaction. These interesting findings will be discussed in the general conclusions.

Contrary to hypothesis 27, employability was not associated with engagement (see Table 22, page 158) or exhaustion (Table 23, page 160); nor did this occurred in the preliminary results. Additionally, hierarchical regression analyses did not show the predicted direction of employability's association with cynicism (Table 24, page 161). In contrast to our expectations the nature of this relationship was a positive one ( $\beta = .20, p \leq .001$ ). The preliminary results also pointed out a significant positive relation between both variables ( $r = .20, p \leq .001$ ). As regards to employability's association with general well-being, the results did not confirmed hypothesis 27. Employability was not significantly related to psychological distress (Table 25, page 162) nor to life satisfaction (Table 26, page 163). In addition, no significant relation was found in the preliminary results. These unexpected findings will be discussed in the general conclusions.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

The present study aimed to advance understanding the similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability in the frame of their association with well-being outcomes (see Table 27 in this page). Rather unexpectedly, both job insecurity and employability had a positive relation with cynicism. However, there were more differences between both concepts. In line with previous findings in the European context, job insecurity proved to be associated with impaired well-being, with the exception of career dissatisfaction. In contrast, the relation between employability and well-being seems to be more complicated; having a positive association with career satisfaction (work-related well-being) and cynicism (work-related impaired well-being). In addition, job insecurity is significantly related with general well-being, while no such association is found with employability.

Table 27. *Job Insecurity and Employability's associations with Well-being Outcomes.*

|                                |                               | <i>Job insecurity</i> | <i>Employability</i> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Work related well-being</i> | <i>Job satisfaction</i>       | -.20***               | n.s.                 |
|                                | <i>Career satisfaction</i>    | n.s.                  | .14***               |
|                                | <i>Engagement</i>             | -.11**                | n.s.                 |
|                                | <i>Burnout - exhaustion</i>   | .26***                | n.s.                 |
|                                | <i>Burnout - cynicism</i>     | .29***                | .20***               |
| <i>General well-being</i>      | <i>Psychological distress</i> | .29***                | n.s.                 |
|                                | <i>Life satisfaction</i>      | -.18***               | n.s.                 |

\*  $p \leq .05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Job insecurity has a strong relation especially with burnout and psychological distress. As mentioned before, hypothesized relations between job insecurity and its well-being outcomes (Hx) were found with the exception of career satisfaction. A possible explanation



could be that job insecurity is related to the job as such, thus, it will be more strongly associated with job satisfaction than with career satisfaction. In the same way, employability relates to the perceived possibilities to make job transitions: it is not constrained by a specific job, thus, it might be more relevant for career satisfaction than to job satisfaction. This could be the case since once variables which denoted the interplay with the work and family environment were introduced in the hierarchical analysis the associations job insecurity-career satisfaction and employability-job satisfaction became non significant. This suggests that employability is a career concept. This might be the case because employability's nature implies transitioning which might be more linked to building up a career and its achievements, rather than focusing on the characteristics of the present job.

Another aim of this dissertation was to study employability's relation with well-being. As we have seen in our theoretical arguments, it may be assumed that employability is likely to contribute with building up a work identity, gaining a sense of control over one's career and achieving self-realization. These contributions are expected to be related with well-being. However, the present results, especially as regards cynicism and job satisfaction, contradict classical assumptions about the benefits that employability would bring for the workers. To understand these findings we will concentrate on three main results. Firstly, as mentioned before, only career satisfaction presented a positive relation in line with hypothesis y. Secondly, in contrast with the expected relationship direction, employability was positively associated with cynicism. Thirdly, an additional hierarchical regression analysis surprisingly showed that employability would correlate negatively with job satisfaction when not accounting for the work and family environment control variables. These findings can be interpreted with reference to extrinsic motivation, as defined by the Self-determination Theory. In the literature, career satisfaction has been measured in terms of career success (Reitzle, Körner, & Vondracek, 2009; Baruch & Quick, 2007), which may stress extrinsic (e.g., acquired position) or intrinsic aspects (e.g. job as such). Considering that the present career satisfaction scale measures achievements derived from one's career, employability's positive association with cynicism and negative one with job satisfaction, an interesting profile emerges. The profile of highly external employable workers would correspond to the one of extrinsically motivated workers. Highly external employable workers may have internalized the utility of gaining achievements in their careers, while the activities directly related to the job as such may be seen as an obligation. As a result, these extrinsic motivated employees are likely to have a negative perception about their work and colleagues, which may be seen as instrumental for achieving their goals (e.g., improving their income or

developing their career). Following this, it might be expected that they could express low job satisfaction as well as a negative attitude towards their job and a lack of identification with it. This could explain employability's negative association with job satisfaction and its positive relation with cynicism which was originally conceived as an attitude towards work. Recent research could support these arguments; an extrinsic orientation was positively associated with external employability (De Cuyper, Van den Broeck, & De Witte, in prep).

**PART 4**  
**DISCUSSION**



## **PART 4**

### **DISCUSSION**

The overall aim of this dissertation was to advance knowledge on the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability. In the present section we evaluate whether our research contributed to this aim and, we discuss possible implications. Thus, we will discuss our results (Chapter 1), the limitations and strengths of our study (Chapter 2), as well as research, practical and policy implications (Chapter 3), and future avenues for research (Chapter 4).



# CHAPTER 1

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The present research aimed to advance understanding about the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability. To accomplish this goal we: (1) presented a clear employability concept in parallel with an earlier job insecurity definition, (2) established the conceptual and empirical relation between these two concepts, (3) investigated the antecedents of job insecurity and employability, and (4) studied their consequences on employees' well-being. In this chapter, we summarize our research's findings and discuss them. This chapter comprises a total of five sections. The first four sections correspond to the discussion of each one of our aims, while the fifth one includes general conclusions about our findings. Taking into consideration the wide scope of our research, a summary table has been included (please see next page). This table comprises a systematic review of the expected (as framed in the hypotheses) and actual results of our study. It may be of help to keep it in mind while this chapter unfolds.

### 1. DEFINITIONS OF JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY

In line with the European subjective approach to job insecurity, this concept was defined as “the employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job”. Following the self-perceived approach of Berntson and colleagues (Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006; Berntson & Marklund, 2007) and De Cuyper and De Witte (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010) we defined employability as “the employee's perceived possibilities of gaining a job in the external labour market”. This definition is based on previous job insecurity research.

In accordance to this research's aims, we established a conceptual comparison upon our proposed job insecurity and employability definitions (aim 1) as well as their possible relation (aim 2). Some similarities between our main concepts are that they both arise from a European perspective and have developed in accordance to the new employer-employee relation; they focus on the individual more specifically on the employee. This does not mean that our concepts are based on an agency perspective (Forrier, Sels, & Stynen, 2009). Quite the contrary, both are subjective phenomena, thus, the labour market is considered ‘through the eyes’ of the worker and their perceived possibilities of the occurrence of a specific situation (*losing a job* for job insecurity or *gaining* one for employability). In this sense, it might be suggested that both concepts look towards the output of a situation in the *future*, they concentrate on the job as a whole rather than on job characteristics

Table 28. *Summary of expected and actual results.*

| Relation     |   |  | Job insecurity |         | Employability |         |
|--------------|---|--|----------------|---------|---------------|---------|
|              |   |  | Expected       | Results | Expected      | Results |
|              |   |  | -              | -.09*   | -             | -.09*   |
| Antecedents  | Personality                                   | Core-self evaluations                                      | -              | -.34*** | +             | .12*    |
|              | Interplay with the family environment         | Married or cohabiting as compared to single workers        | -              | n.s.    | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Contributory earners as compared to sole or main earners   | -              | n.s.    | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Number of dependents                                       | +              | n.s.    | -             | n.s.    |
|              | Interplay with the work environment           | High education as compared to all other educational levels | -              | n.s.    | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Low education as compared to all other educational levels  | +              | n.s.    | -             | -.21*** |
|              |   | Impression management                                      | -              | .11**   | +             | .07**   |
|              |   | Management as compared to all other occupational levels    | -              | -.13*   | +             | .10*    |
|              |   | Blue-collar as compared to all other occupational levels   | +              | n.s.    | -             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Permanent workers as compared to temporary                 | -              | n.s.    | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Tenure   | -              | n.s.    | -             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Working hours  | +              | n.s.    | -             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Workers without other job                                  | -              | -.08*   | -             | -.09*   |
|              | Perceived internal and external labour market | Perceived recent organizational changes                    | +              | .20***  |               |         |
|              |   | Perceived number of employees                              | ----           | ----    | ----          | ----    |
|              |   | Perceived number of unemployed                             | +              | .24***  | ----          | ----    |
|              |   | Perceived number of employment opportunities               | ----           | ----    | +             | .25***  |
| Consequences | Work related well-being                       | Job satisfaction   | -              | -.20*** | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Career satisfaction  | -              | n.s.    | +             | .14***  |
|              |   | Engagement   | -              | -.11**  | +             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Burnout – exhaustion                                       | +              | .26***  | -             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Burnout – cynicism   | +              | .29***  | -             | .20***  |
|              | General well-being                            | Psychological distress                                     | +              | .29***  | -             | n.s.    |
|              |   | Life satisfaction  | -              | -.18*** | +             | n.s.    |



(i.e., have a quantitative dimension) and share a cognitive dimension (*probability* for job insecurity and *possibilities* for employability). As regards to differences, job insecurity looks towards the future of a present job, that is, in the internal labour market while employability concentrates on a potential job in the external labour market (De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008; Wittekind, Raeder, & Grote, 2010). Job insecurity has an affective aspect not present in employability. Most importantly, while job insecurity implies losing a job, employability considers gaining one.

## 2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB INSECURITY AND EMPLOYABILITY

We hypothesized the existence of a negative relationship between employability and job insecurity. Note that we saw employability as an antecedent to job insecurity, in line with the study by De Cuyper and colleagues (2008) and based upon the following four arguments:

4. *Losing vs. gaining*: losing (i.e., job insecurity) may denote a sense of helplessness and lack of control refraining the individual from taking concrete actions to cope with an undesired situation. In contrast, gaining (i.e., employability) might be associated with a perceived increased flexibility in the labour market (Berntson et al., 2006a), allowing the individual to adapt proactively to challenging situations (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004). Thus, while losing might affect negatively the workers' behavior towards their future job situation, gaining might influence it in a positive way. In line with this argument we hypothesized that job insecurity relates negatively with employability.

5. *Highly employable workers tend to be offered better and more secure jobs*: In this dissertation, we define a strong labour market position as being highly employable. Hence, highly employable workers will be valued by the organization in such a way that they belong to the primary segment workers who hold fairly secure jobs. In contrast, less employable workers might have a vulnerable labour market position and thus, belonging to the secondary segment in which organizations do not invest in job quality or in job security. Considering that job insecurity might be partly based upon contextual factors, it seems reasonable to expect that highly employable as compared with less employable workers might experience less job insecurity. This argument is based upon the Flexible Firm Model from Atkinson (1984) and the Dual Labour Market Theory of Doeringer and Piore (1971).

6. *Highly employable workers tend to seek and choose better and more secure jobs*: Highly employable workers will tend to invest more in the development of their human capital, and consequently they might seek out for better jobs (i.e., secure jobs) in exchange for their investment and thus, are less likely to experience the locked-in phenomenon or

occupational confinement (Aronsson & Goransson, 1999). This argument is based upon Human Capital Theory of Becker (1993).

7. *Highly employable workers tend to view changes in the workplace as challenges instead of threats:* Changes in the workplace might not be interpreted by employable workers as having a significant negative effect on their labour market position, but as an open door to new and better opportunities in the workplace. In addition, because a high employable worker perceives himself/herself as able to gain a job, he/she will perceive himself/herself as able to cope with an eventual job loss. As a result, highly employable workers might perceive less likely to experience job insecurity. This argument is based upon the Appraisal Theory of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and on the adaptive nature of employability presented by Fugate and colleagues (2004).

Our findings supported our hypothesis albeit the negative relationship between job insecurity and employability was fairly weak ( $-.09^*$ ). These findings are comparable with recent research (Berntson, Sverke, & Näswall, 2010; De Cuyper et al., 2008). The absence of a stronger correlation might indicate that job insecurity and employability are concepts which are not part of the same continuum, but that on the contrary are two distinctive concepts along, for example, their focus upon losing versus gaining, or upon the internal versus the external labour market. This might also indicate that although employability might be an alternative for job insecurity, it might be simplistic to call it the new job security, as this term may be failing in understanding the nature of a phenomenon like employability.

### 3. ANTECEDENTS

There is a need to clarify the antecedents of both job insecurity and employability. As regards to job insecurity only few studies have examined its potential predictors (e.g., Sverke, Hellgren, Näswall, Chirumbolo, De Witte, & Goslinga, 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Kinnunen, Mauno, Nätti, & Happonen, 1999; Hartley, Jacobson, Klandermans, & van Vuuren, 1991; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984) while in employability research, and the self-perceived approach in particular, there is a recent interest regarding this issue (e.g., Wittekind, 2007; Berntson et al., 2006a). Thus, our project contributes extending previous research. Moreover, our research includes a wide number of antecedents which are organized into four groups: (1) personality, (2) interplay with the family environment, (3) interplay with the work environment and (4) perceived internal and external labour market. In this section, we discuss our research findings for each of these groups (see “Summary Table of Expected and Actual

Results”). It is noteworthy that not only the employability concept used in this dissertation was established in the framework of job insecurity literature, but this is also the case for most of the antecedents and consequences included in our research model.

### **3.1. Personality**

Core self-evaluations (CSE) refer to the evaluation of one’s worth, effectiveness and competence (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). This higher order construct comprises specific personality traits such as self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, internal locus of control and emotional stability (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2003; Judge & Bono, 2001).

We hypothesized that CSE relate negatively to job insecurity and positively to employability. Our hypothesis on the relation with job insecurity was based upon the frameworks of Core Self-evaluations Theory (Judge et al. 2003; Judge et al., 1997) and Self-verification Theory (Swann, 1983), as well as on earlier empirical evidence regarding the association between job insecurity and specific traits of CSE such as neuroticism (Tivendel & Bourbonnais, 2000), low self-esteem (Kinnunen, Feldt, & Mauno, 2003; Kinnunen, et al., 1999), external locus of control and negative affectivity (Sverke et. al., 2004; Van Vuuren, Klandermans, Jacobson, & Hartley, 1991). Our employability hypothesis was based upon Core Self-evaluations Theory (Judge et al. 2003), the proactive and adaptive nature of employability (Fugate et al., 2004), Self-consistency Theory (Korman, 1970) and previous empirical research regarding the association between employability and specific personality traits such as self-efficacy (Berntson, Sverke, Näswall, & Hellgren, 2006) and openness to experiences (Van Dam, 2004; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).

Results supported our hypotheses reporting a significant negative relation between CSE and job insecurity ( $-.34, p \leq .001$ ) and a positive association between CSE and employability ( $.12, p \leq .001$ ). Thus, it might be argued that CSE are antecedents of both concepts. Nevertheless, this personality construct is a fairly powerful predictor of job insecurity adding up to 11% of the explaining variance, while this is not the case for employability.

### **3.2. Interplay with the family environment**

We considered variables of the family environment which could account for an individual’s household responsibilities: family status (married or cohabiting as compared to singles), financial contribution to the household (contributory earner as compared to sole or main earner) and number of dependents.

We hypothesized that family status and financial contribution to the household relate negatively to job insecurity and positively to employability, while number of dependent relates positively to job insecurity and negatively to employability. Our hypotheses were elaborated upon the framework of an individual's breadwinner role (Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2006; De Witte, 1999). The reasoning behind our hypotheses is that: (1) employees with family responsibilities might be prone to experience job insecurity because losing their jobs may also jeopardize fulfilling their roles as breadwinners, and (2) individuals with support from a partner and with less household responsibilities might be more open to look for other job alternatives and thus, perceive themselves as employable.

Contrary to our hypotheses, none of the family environment related variables added in explaining the variance neither on job insecurity nor on employability.

### **3.3. Interplay with the job environment**

We took into account variables which might account for the employees' assessment of their labour market vulnerability or attractiveness in their job environment. We included educational level, impression management and work related variables such as occupational position.

We hypothesised that educational level, impression management, occupational position, permanent contract, tenure and not having another job relate negatively to job insecurity, while working hours associates positively with job insecurity. In addition, educational level, impression management, occupational position and permanent contract were hypothesized to associate positively with employability, while working hours, tenure and not having another job relate negatively to employability.

As regards to job insecurity, hypotheses were elaborated upon different frameworks: for educational level we used Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993); for impression management we were based upon literary assumptions linked to employability and Social Capital (McArlde, Waters, Briscoe, & Hall, 2007) and for the work related variables we used Dual Labour Market Theory (Doringer & Piore, 1971) in addition to earlier findings on occupational position (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004; Näswall & De Witte, 2003; Kinnunen et al., 1999), type of contract (De Cuyper et al., 2008; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2006, 2007; De Witte & Näswall, 2003; Parker, Griffin, Sprigg, & Wall, 2002; Sverke, Gallagher, & Hellgren, 2000) and weekly working hours (Burke & McAteer, 2007; Caruso, 2006).

As regards to employability, hypotheses were based upon different frameworks: for educational level we used Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993) in addition to earlier

empirical findings (Berntson et al., 2006a; Wittekind, 2007); for impression management we were based upon literary assumptions linked to Social Capital (Fugate et al., 2004; Van der Heijden, 2002) and earlier research showing that social capital enhances employability (Wittekind, 2007; Eby et al., 2003; Van der Heijden, 2002) and for the work related variables we used Dual Labour Market Theory (Doringer & Piore, 1971).

As hypothesized, not having an additional job was negatively associated with job insecurity. Our hypothesis regarding occupational level was partially supported when management as compared to all other occupational levels presented a negative relation with job insecurity but no significant results were found with respect to blue-collar workers as compared to all other occupational levels. All other hypotheses were not supported by our findings. No significant relation was found for educational level and all the other work related variables. Moreover, quite surprisingly and contrary to our hypothesis, impression management showed a positive association with job insecurity. It is noteworthy that impression management comes from the employability but not from the job insecurity literature.

As regards to employability, results confirmed that impression management is positively related to employability, and that not having another job is negatively related with employability. Our findings partially confirmed that educational level is positively related to employability: low education as compared to all other educational levels was a strong predictor. Occupational position's positive association with employability was also partially confirmed, being in this case management as compared to all other occupational groups a stronger predictor. Further analyses showed that educational level has a slightly stronger effect than occupational level. All other hypotheses were not confirmed, as no significant relationship was found.

Our findings suggest that as regards to the interplay with the job environment, job insecurity and employability may share some antecedents: core self-evaluations, impression management, occupational level and not having an additional job. In fact, not having another job relates negatively to both job insecurity and employability, while impression management relates positively to both concepts. As a way of contrast, occupational level presents a negative relation to job insecurity and a positive one to employability. An additional difference concerns their relation to low educational level which has a negative association with employability, while its relation to job insecurity seems to disappear once other work related variables are included in the analysis. Based on these results and on earlier findings, it

might be suggested that educational level might be a fairly stronger predictor of employability than of job insecurity.

As regards the unexpected result of a positive relation between impression management and job insecurity, it might be suggested that impression management is a consequence rather than a predictor of job insecurity; insecure workers might be prone to invest in impression management as a means to gain strength in the labour market.

### **3.4. Perceived internal and external labour market**

This group of antecedents intends to understand the position of the worker beyond his or her job, thus, it incorporates variables of an organizational and macro level. Reflecting the interaction with the internal labour market, we find perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of employees, considering the external labour market we included perceived number of unemployed and perceived number of employment opportunities.

We expected a positive relation between perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed with job insecurity. The associations with perceived number of employees and perceived number of employment opportunities were explored. Given the external dimension of our employability concept, we hypothesized a positive relation between perceived number of employment opportunities and employability, while no hypotheses were elaborated regarding the other variables of the interplay with the labour market.

Our hypotheses for job insecurity were based upon literature assumptions regarding the effects of rumours of reorganization and changes of management (Kinnunen et al., 2000; Ashford, Lee, & Bobk, 1999; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984) and the definition of the different levels of job insecurity by Mohr (2000). As regards to employability, the respective hypothesis was based upon previous research which indicated that structural factors such as the availability of jobs influence employability (Berntson et al., 2006a).

Results supported our hypotheses. Perceived recent number of organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed are positively related to job insecurity but they are not associated with employability. Perceived number of employment opportunities is positively related to employability, while no association is found with respect to job insecurity. In addition, our analyses showed that perceived number of employees did not predict job insecurity or employability.

### **3.5. Conclusions on antecedents**

Our results support previous findings which indicate that job insecurity and employability are predicted by both individual and structural variables (for job insecurity Mauno & Kinnunen, 2002; for employability Berntson et al., 2006a). Our findings show that job insecurity and employability share some antecedents at a personality level (i.e., core self-evaluations) and at the interplay with the work environment level (i.e., impression management, occupational level and not having an additional job). At the same time, our findings show that neither family related variables nor perceived number of employees are associated with job insecurity or employability.

Despite these similarities, job insecurity and employability have different relations to some of their shared antecedents (i.e., core self-evaluations and occupational level). For instance, occupational position is negatively associated with job insecurity and positively with employability. At the same time, educational level predicts employability when introducing other work-related variables in the analysis, while this influence diminishes to non significance for job insecurity. Moreover, there is a clear difference as regards to the antecedents comprised in the level of perceived interplay with the internal and external labour market. Perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed are related to job insecurity but not to employability; while perceived number of employment opportunities relates to employability but not to job insecurity.

To sum up, our findings suggest that, while personality is the most important predictor of job insecurity, work-related variables appear to be the major antecedents for employability. Perceived interplay with the labour market antecedents seem to be as important for both of our main concepts although the relationship with these predictors mark an important difference. As a result, our evidence shows that job insecurity and employability definitions are two distinctive concepts. Moreover, that they are not part of a continuum when for instance both concepts have a positive relation to variables such as impression management or workers without another job.

## **4. WELL-BEING OUTCOMES**

In this section, we aim to understand the similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability by studying their association with well-being outcomes. While the relationship between job insecurity and well-being has been extensively studied (for an overview, see Sverke et al., 2006; Sverke et al., 2002; De Witte, 1999), it is only until recently

that an interest for employability's relationship with well-being has begun (e.g., Silla, De Cuyper, Gracia, Peiró, & De Witte, 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Bernston & Marklund, 2007). It is noteworthy that this interest rises in the self-perceived approach to employability, an approach which is grounded in earlier job insecurity literature.

In line with Warr (1994), we considered work-related well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement comprising vigor and dedication dimensions, and burnout, specifically exhaustion and cynicism) and general well-being (i.e., psychological distress and life satisfaction). All the well-being variables included in this dissertation have been extensively studied in job insecurity research with the exception of career satisfaction which pertains to the field of employability research (more specifically as part of different approaches to employability than the self-perceived one; e.g., Nauta, van Vianen, van der Heijden, van Dam, & Willemssen, 2009). The fact that all proposed predictors, with the exception of career satisfaction, arise from the job insecurity literature, might account to certain extent for explaining why the expected employability results differed from the actual ones.

#### **4.1. Work-related well-being**

Work-related well-being measures comprised job satisfaction (Spector, 1997), career satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990), engagement comprising vigor and dedication dimensions (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) and the two main scales of burnout, that is, exhaustion and cynicism (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró, & Grau, 2000).

We expected job insecurity to relate negatively to job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement and positively to exhaustion and cynicism. This hypothesis was elaborated based upon three main theoretical frameworks: (1) occupational identity and psychological needs: Psychosocial Development Theory (Erikson, 1959) and Latent Deprivation Theory (Jahoda, 1982), (2) stress theories on unpredictability and lack of control: perceived unpredictability and lack of control (Furda & Meijman, 1992), Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and Warr's Vitamin Model (1994), (3) social exchange: The Effort-Reward Imbalance Model (Siegrist, 1996) and Psychological Contract Theory (Rousseau, 1990), as well as on earlier findings regarding the relation between job insecurity and poor well being, that is, job dissatisfaction (Ashford, et al., 1989; Rosenblatt, Talmud, & Ruvio, 1999), burnout (De Witte, 2000; Dekker & Schaufeli, 1995), impaired psychological well-being (Silla et al.,



2009; Hellgren, Sverke, & Isakson, 1999; Büssing 1999), life dissatisfaction (Silla et al., 2009; Lim, 1997).

As regards to employability, we expected a positive relationship with job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement and negatively to exhaustion and cynicism. This hypothesis was grounded in theoretical arguments which assumed that employability is likely to contribute with building up a work identity (Psychosocial Development Theory, Erikson, 1959, and Latent Deprivation Theory, Jahoda, 1982), gaining a sense of control over one's career (Appraisal Theory, Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, and Warr's Vitamin Model, 1994) and achieving self-realization (Job-demand-resource Model, Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Self-determination Theory, Deci & Ryan, 2000). In addition, to formulate this hypothesis we based upon a recent study indicating employability's positive relation to engagement (De Cuyper et al., 2008).

The hypothesized relations between job insecurity and work-related well-being outcomes were supported with the exception of career satisfaction. As regards to employability, findings only confirmed a positive relation with career satisfaction. Moreover, employability was related to cynicism but contrary to what was expected it was a positive association.

While job insecurity proved to be a good predictor as well as detrimental for employee's work related well-being (i.e., with the exception of career satisfaction), employability only showed to be a predictor for career satisfaction. Surprisingly, our research also shows that both employability and job insecurity predict cynicism. These unexpected results may have some explanations.

As regards to career satisfaction, it might be that while job insecurity might be limited to the actual job, whereas employability might be related to an individual's career development due to its focus on job transitions. This might be even more evident if we consider that our concept of employability puts the focus on external transitions, thus, this might diminish its relation to the present job. This would explain why job insecurity related to job satisfaction (linked to actual job) but not to career satisfaction, and why our external employability relates to career satisfaction but not to job satisfaction.

A second explanation was explored. An additional hierarchical regression analysis unexpectedly showed a negative relation between employability and job satisfaction when not accounting for the work and family environment control variables. These additional results indicate that highly employable workers show career satisfaction, job dissatisfaction and cynicism. An additional explanation regarding these unexpected results might be interpreted

in the framework of Self-determination Theory; the profile of highly employable workers might correspond to the one of extrinsically motivated employees. It might be suggested that highly employable workers may have internalized the utility of gaining achievements in their careers, while the activities directly related to the job as such may be seen as an obligation. As a result, these extrinsic motivated employees are likely to have a negative perception about their work and colleagues, which may be seen as instrumental for achieving their goals (e.g., improving their income or developing their career). Following this, it might be expected that they could express low job satisfaction as well as a negative attitude towards their job and a lack of identification with it (i.e., cynicism). Recent research could support these arguments; extrinsic orientation as defined by Self-determination Theory, was positively associated with external employability (De Cuyper, Van den Broeck, & De Witte, in prep).

#### **4.2. General well-being**

General well-being included life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) and psychological distress (Goldberg, 1978, 1992), which put an emphasis on the positive and on the negative side of well-being, respectively.

We expected job insecurity to relate negatively to life satisfaction and positively to psychological distress. This hypothesis was elaborated based upon the three main theoretical frameworks used to establish the relations with work related well-being (i.e., occupational identity and psychological needs, stress theories on unpredictability and lack of control and social exchange) in addition to earlier findings establishing job insecurity's relation with impaired psychological well-being (Silla et al., 2009; Hellgren et al., 1999; Büssing 1999) and life dissatisfaction (Silla et al., 2009; Lim, 1997).

As regards to employability, we expected this concept to relate positively to life satisfaction and negatively to psychological distress. This hypothesis was elaborated upon the same framework used to predict a positive relation between employability and work related well-being, in addition to the empirical evidence of a few recent studies showing a positive relation between employability and life satisfaction (De Cuyper et al., 2008), general health and mental well-being (Berntson, Näaswall, & Sverke, 2008; Berntson & Marklund, 2007).

Results supported our job insecurity hypothesis but did not support our employability hypothesis. Job insecurity shows to have detrimental consequences on general well-being (i.e., positive relation to psychological distress and negative relation with life satisfaction), thus, there are no coincidences regarding job insecurity and employability's relation to general

well-being. These results put to the test classical assumption regarding employability's benefits for employees' well-being.

#### **4.3. Conclusions on well-being outcomes**

Unexpectedly, both job insecurity and employability had a positive relation with cynicism. However, there were more differences between both concepts. In line with previous findings in the European context, job insecurity proved to be associated with impaired well-being, with the exception of career dissatisfaction. Job insecurity has a strong relation especially with burnout and psychological distress.

In contrast, the relation between employability and well-being seems to be more complicated; having a positive association with career satisfaction (work-related well-being) and cynicism (work-related impaired well-being). In addition, job insecurity is significantly related with general well-being, while no such association is found with employability. Thus, our results not only show that employability and job insecurity are different concepts but also put to the test assumptions about the benefits that employability would bring for workers' well-being.

### **5. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

We are confident that through this research we accomplished our goal to advance understanding about the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability.

Based upon our conceptual discussion, we defined job insecurity (employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job) and employability (employee's perceived possibilities to make job transition, that is, to gain a job in the external labour market). This first step, allowed us to gain understanding on the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between both concepts.

At a conceptual level, some similarities between them are that they belong to the European tradition, evolved in accordance to changes in the employer-employee relation, focus on the employee, are subjective phenomena, look towards the future, have a quantitative and a cognitive dimension. As regards to differences, job insecurity focuses on the present job, the internal labour market, comprises an affective component and has losing as its core element; while employability concentrates on a potential job, the external labour market and has gaining a job as its core element.

The hypothesized negative relation between employability and job insecurity was empirically supported, albeit this association was fairly weak ( $-.09^*$ ). The findings also suggest that impression management and occupational situation are predictors of both job insecurity and employability. Nevertheless, results also indicate that personality is the most important predictor of job insecurity, while work-related variables appear to be the major antecedents for employability. As regards to well-being outcomes, job insecurity findings were in line with previous research indicating that it has a detrimental effect on well-being. In our research, job insecurity has a strong relation especially with burnout and psychological distress. Employability results in this regard were quite unexpected, indicating a positive association with career satisfaction and cynicism.

To sum up, the conceptual and empirical comparison of employability and job insecurity indicates that they are negatively related and that despite some similarities, they are two distinctive concepts with different antecedents and consequences. Thus, it might suggest that they are not part of the same continuum. Furthermore, our findings challenge classical assumptions regarding the benefits that employability would bring for workers' well-being. Considering the exposed it might be indicated that although employability is conceived in the literature as the new job security, this might be a simplistic view that might hinder the understanding of a phenomenon like employability.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS**

As in all studies, the preset research had limitations which may be classified as conceptual and methodological due to the nature of our main aim, that is, to establish a conceptual and empirical comparison between job insecurity and employability. Despite these limitations our research also presents strengths: conceptual, empirical and contextual. Thus, in this chapter, we will discuss the limitations and strengths of our research.

#### **1. LIMITATIONS**

In this section we will discuss the conceptual and methodological shortcomings of our research, how we coped with them, and the extent to which they possibly affected the results.

##### **1.1. Conceptual**

As we mentioned in our previous chapter, the present research aimed to advance understanding about the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between job insecurity and employability. In doing so one of the main and first tasks was to establish a clear definition for job insecurity and employability. As we have seen before in our conceptual debate (Part 1 – Chapter 1), there are certain points of consensus regarding job insecurity in the European perspective. The picture is far more complex as regards to employability. In fact, some authors have described the employability concept as being a complex mosaic (i.e., Forrier & Sels, 2003). Thus, in order to facilitate the comparison between our main concepts, we chose the employability approach which was most similar to job insecurity, that is, self-perceived employability. It is noteworthy that most of the main representatives of this perspective had previously studied job insecurity (e.g., Berntson et al., 2006a; De Cuyper & De Witte, in press). Thus, it might be argued that the self-perceived employability approach evolved considering the job insecurity literature and previous job insecurity definitions.

Taking the above into consideration, we acknowledge that employability is a much broader concept than the one of our chosen definition. Moreover, if we had used other approaches to employability such as the competence-based (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2005) or the activity-based (Van Dam, 2004) approach, results may have been different. For instance, if we had taken the competence-based approach, job insecurity and

employability may have been part of the same continuum instead of being two distinctive concepts. Researchers in the competence-based view define employability as “the continuously fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences” (Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2005, p. 143). Thus, these authors consider “keeping the job” a crucial element of the employability concept; it is not only important to make a job transition but to stay in a ‘fruitful’ position. In this view, job insecurity and employability could be placed in a continuum<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, for our conceptualizing, we decided to exclude the ‘retaining’ component of employability. Our interest was in dependent employees (i.e., those who largely depend on one employer) while we acknowledge that the retaining aspect might be more relevant in agent focus approaches which include boundaryless careers.

Our results might also have differed from other representatives of the self-perceived employability approach as our concept focuses on the external labour market while other authors do not clearly distinguish between the internal and the external labour market (Berntson et al., 2006a). However, we trust that a clear differentiation of both dimensions is strength of our research. In addition, if we had chosen to include a qualitative dimension for both job insecurity and employability we might have had different results. We will extend on the use of quantitative and qualitative dimensions for both concepts in Chapter 4 (Implications for Future Research), as we consider them of particular importance and interesting avenues for future research.

## 1.2. Methodological

As with all empirical research, there are some methodological limitations inherent to this study. In this section we will discuss these limitations, the way in which we coped with them, the extent to which they might have had an impact on the results as well as the benefits that using these methods brought to our research.

### *Cross-sectional design*

The present research has a cross-sectional design which has some disadvantages, the most important being that it does not allow causal interpretations, thus, there is the risk of reversed causation. For instance, this could mean that well-being might also have affected job insecurity and employability rather than the other way around. In the frame of the drift

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<sup>3</sup> This point is understandable if we take into account that “keeping” could be interpreted as the negative of “loosing” the job.

hypothesis (Kohn & Schooler, 1982, Zapf, Dormann, & Frese, 1996, as cited in van der Heijden, Demerouti, & Bakker, 2008, p. 574), we could talk about the possibility of a selection effect. The idea is that individuals with impaired health will drift towards poor jobs with higher job stressors. In this framework workers with impaired well-being may be unable to retain good jobs and thus, might be more exposed to jobs with stressors such as job insecurity. In the same way, it might be expected that individuals with good health might get better jobs. Thus, individuals with good health might perceive themselves with more possibilities of job transition.

Nevertheless, in our view the cross-sectional design did not downplay the relevance of our results because they are in line with theory and earlier longitudinal research. As regards to job insecurity, research has consistently established its relationship with impaired well being (for reviews, see De Witte, 2005, 1999; Sverke, Hellgren, & Näswall, 2002; Sverke et. al, 2006). Findings in longitudinal research support that this relationship can be interpreted in a causal way rather than the other way around (Hellgren & Sverke, 2002). As regards to employability, theoretically it has been related to individual's optimal functioning and thus, a positive association with well-being might be expected (Berntson & Marklund, 2007; Fugate et al., 2004; De Vries, Gründemann & Van Vuuren, 2001). This is supported by the findings of the few studies on the relationship between employability and well-being. For instance, De Cuyper and colleagues (De Cuyper et al., 2008) found that employability relates positively to engagement and life satisfaction. Moreover, the longitudinal study by Berntson and Marklund (2007) shows that employability influences general health and mental well-being.

Furthermore, we chose a cross-sectional design for the following reasons: it allowed gaining quick theoretical development while testing a research model of such wide scope and in a new context specifically in Metropolitan Lima. Besides, it allowed us to avoid a severe risk of sample attrition among job insecure and employable workers.

### *Convenience sample*

We opted for a convenience sampling targeting mainly employees from big and medium organizations pertaining to different industries of Metropolitan Lima, without excluding employees from small or public organizations. In contrast with the general working population of Metropolitan Lima our sample does not consider employees of micro-enterprises who make up 61,4% of the general working population and has a lower proportion of employees with low education as compared to the general working population of Metropolitan Lima. For instance, given the earlier studies on educational level as an

antecedent of employability, it may be suggested that our sample was more employable than the general working population of Metropolitan Lima. As regards to the working population of big and medium organisations, there are no major differences. It must be stated that we do not claim that our sample is representative of the general working population of Metropolitan Lima nor of its working population from big and medium companies. In addition, our study was based on the voluntary participation not only of respondents but of the organizations where they worked. This may cause a bias in our sample composition as it might be the case that the healthier organizations may be more eager to participate. To sum up, in view of the methodological restrictions of using a convenience sample, our results should be interpreted with caution as they might reflect the particular nature of our sample, thus, they may not be generalized to other samples or contexts.

In spite of the above exposed disadvantage, we chose for a convenience sample because it allowed us to target organizations where job insecurity and employability arose as particularly relevant and where we could collect a larger number of questionnaires in a single application. In addition, it allowed us to achieve heterogeneity by including organizations from different industries and also by being open to the participation of employees from small and public organizations. Furthermore, as explained in this dissertation's Methodology Chapter (Part 2), we took some measures in order to counteract some shortcomings of using a convenience sample and to increase the validity of our findings: we aimed for a large sample, we indicated the extent in which our sample differs from the general working population of Metropolitan Lima and the one of big and medium organizations and we controlled for the organizations in our analyses.

### *Self-reported data*

Our research is based on self-reported data which may have inflated the associations, due to the variance common to this method (Crampton & Wagner, 1994; Spector, 1987) or personality factors such as positive or negative affectivity (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). Furthermore, it must be considered that self-report measures depend on recall or might be biased by social desirability. Nevertheless, our job insecurity and employability concepts are of a subjective nature thus self-reports are the best method in order to assess these phenomena as they assess perceptions of the individuals. The same might be stated for well-being data. We are interested in the employees' perception of their sense of well-being and not in actual biophysical measures such as heart rate variability.



According to some authors the problems with self-reported data might be overstated (Spector, 2006; Crampton & Wagner 1994). However, in order to safeguard the validity and reliability of our measures we considered the suggestions of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003) to reduce this threat (e.g., anonymity was guaranteed and respondents were instructed there were no right or wrong answers).

### *Measurements*

Our measures were generally reliable. The coefficient alpha reliabilities for all our scales were satisfactory, ranging from .70 to .93 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The only measure which presented some statistical complications was engagement as the items of the vigour and dedication scale presented a one-dimensional structure. Nevertheless, this is not unexpected as this structure has already been found in earlier research (e.g., Sonnentag, 2003).

An additional point regards the establishment of the antecedents at the level of interplay with the family environment (i.e., family status, financial contribution to the household and number of dependents). Our results did not show any association with neither job insecurity nor employability. A shortcoming might have been the way in which these variables were formulated as they followed the European tradition while the household composition of families in Peru might be quite different. For example, family status was dichotomized as married or cohabiting vs. single hypothesising that those who have a couple will perceive low job insecurity as they will have the economical support of their partner. This picture might be quite different in Lima and Peru where it is more common for single individuals to live in their parents' household. Thus, being single in the Peruvian context does not imply being the sole bearers of their living expenses.

## **2. STRENGTHS**

Despite some conceptual and empirical limitations, we consider that our research has specific strengths at a conceptual, empirical and context level.

### **2.1. Conceptual**

Although the project is wide in scope, it allows a deep analysis of our two main concepts. In the literature, job insecurity and employability are often mentioned in the same debate (e.g. Fugate et al., 2004; Forrier & Sels, 2003; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). However, the relationship between these two concepts has mostly been

taken for granted while there are few studies which actually examine it (e.g., Silla et al., 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2008). In addition, there exists a lack of consensus regarding the employability concept (Fugate & Sels, 2003) which might turn into a constraint when studying its relation to job insecurity.

Our research helped to clarify the debate about how job insecurity and employability are related, conceptually and empirically. It was conceptually stated that they are distinctive concepts which are negatively associated. An additional strength of our research is that the employability concept contributes to set up a clear line between internal and external employability, a limit which remained diffused in previous approaches (e.g., Berntson et al., 2006a).

Our focus on job insecurity and employability contributes to clarify the nature of work in the labour market of nowadays; it adds up in the understanding the role the individual plays in the new employee-employer relation and the extent in which his or her behaviour is affected by it. Furthermore, our research also contributes to present policy oriented debates such as flexicurity and the importance of understanding employability in a context of increasing job insecurity.

## **2.2. Empirical**

Our process of applying the research was successful resulting in a very to high response rate (78%). Previous research in the field such as the ones of Silla, De Cuyper, Gracia, Peiró and De Witte (2009) obtained response rates over 50% in all the organizations, except in the shop (22%), while De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte and Alarco (2008) reported a response rate of 87,6% in an industrial setting and between 33% and 58% in six smaller retail organisations.

Our research contributes also to the empirical literature by providing evidence about the relationship between job insecurity and employability, as well as their similarities and differences in their association to the antecedents and consequences included in our research. Albeit it was weak, the conceptually proposed negative relation between job insecurity and employability was supported by our findings. The fact that they are different concepts is also supported by the empirical evidence raised in our research which indicates the particular relation that each construct has with the diverse antecedents and consequences included in this study. For instance, findings showed that while personality and the perceived labour market are the most important predictors of job insecurity, work-related variables were indicated to be as major antecedents for employability.

Our research not only contributes to clarify the association between job insecurity and employability, but it helps to extend present research. For instance, we studied the association of impression management with job insecurity. Our results suggested that instead of being an antecedent, impression management might be used as a protection mechanism by insecure employees. In addition, our research extends recent research upon the relation between employability and well-being (i.e., De Cuyper et al., 2008; Silla et al., 2009). It is noteworthy that career satisfaction had been studied before in the framework of competence-based and activity-based approaches to employability but not in the self-perceived employability view. A major contribution of our empirical findings is that they challenge the emphasis that is given to the employability's benefits for the workers (e.g., de Vries, Gründemann, & Van Vuuren, 2001). Our research shows that the relationship between employability and well-being is far more complex.

As regards to the relation between job insecurity and well-being, this has been extensively studied in previous research. Nevertheless, in this study we make a contribution by adding a variable as career satisfaction. Although the association between these two variables was not significant, we trust that these findings are still interesting to define the relation between job insecurity and its influence over different aspects of well-being. This might have future implication in understanding the relation between job insecurity and career success.

### **2.3. Context**

Another strong point of our research is that it allows putting to the test the strength of our concepts by applying our study in a non-European context. Although our concepts arise from a European perspective, our findings replicates the empiric results of previous research such as the negative association between job insecurity and impaired well-being (i.e., low job satisfaction, engagement and life satisfaction; high burnout and psychological distress). At the same time, this represents an initial bridge between the European theoretical and empirical advances towards the Latin-American context.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

In interpreting our research results, readers should be wary of the following issues. Firstly, our findings might have been different if we had chosen to include other dimensions of job insecurity and employability. Secondly, the use of a cross-sectional design limits causal conclusions. Thirdly, the strength of the relationships could be inflated because of common

method variance. Fourthly, our results might reflect the particular nature of our sample, thus, possibilities for generalisation need to be demonstrated. Despite these considerations, our research has conceptual, empirical and contextual strengths. Firstly, it allows for a deep analysis of job insecurity and employability. Secondly, it contributes to clarify the debate about the relation between job insecurity and employability by establishing conceptually and empirically that these are two distinctive concepts which are negatively associated. Thirdly, it establishes a clear differentiation between internal and external employability, contributing with the debate on the definition of employability. Fourthly, it helps to understand the individual's role in the new employee-employer relation and the extent in which his or her behaviour is affected by it. Fifthly, it contributes with an integration of the job insecurity and employability research fields. Sixthly, through this integration process, our project helps to include new theoretical frameworks, to extend the study of possible antecedents and consequences of job insecurity and employability, and to challenge literature assumptions as the benefits of employability for the individual. Seventhly, it had a very high response rate (78%). Eighthly, it allows to strengthen the test of our concepts by applying our research in a non-European context. Finally, our project might be regarded as an initial step between the European theoretical and empirical advances towards the Latin-American context.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **IMPLICATIONS**

In the present chapter we discuss our research on a more general level, namely, in terms of the implications for research, practice and policies.

#### **1. RESEARCH**

The research aim is to establish a conceptual and empirical comparison between job insecurity and employability with respect to their relation, antecedents and consequences. To favour this comparison we choose for the self-perceived employability approach as it is the most similar approach to our job insecurity concept. In fact, as mentioned before, most representatives of the self-perceived approach to employability have previously investigated job insecurity (e.g., Berntson et al, 2006a; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2010, in press). Thus, our definition of employability is in line with the overall accepted job insecurity definition. Furthermore, to a large extent also our choices for the antecedents and consequences are based in job insecurity research. For instance, as regards to antecedents, personality and family variables are new for employability. At the same time, regarding employability's relation with well-being, we not only help extending recent research (e.g., De Cuyper et al., 2008; Silla et al., 2009), but we do so knowing the extensive research that exists about job insecurity and well-being. Simultaneously, we also introduce to job insecurity research some variables of the employability field, such as impression management and career satisfaction. Taking all the above into consideration, we believe that our research contributes by establishing a bridge between two research traditions, that is, job insecurity and employability. In other words, our aim for comparison implies an integration of these two research fields. This integration effort has at least seven important implications for employability and job insecurity research.

Firstly, most importantly, we establish that job insecurity and employability are two distinct concepts. This distinction arises from a comparison in terms of their relation, antecedents and consequences, and despite our choice to adopt a similar approach to both concepts.

Secondly, our effort contributes to unravelling the complex conceptual discussion in the employability field. We are one of the first to make our choices explicit. This helps to distinguish factors that may contribute to the sense of being employable such as willingness

or competencies, from the actual sense of being employable. In this way, our effort enriches the employability literature and proves to be helpful in providing some clarity into a field which Forrier and Sels (2003) call a complex mosaic.

Thirdly, the job insecurity-employability comparison strengthens the development of both research lines by providing new theoretical frameworks for explaining these phenomena. For instance, it incorporates the use of Dual Labour Market Theory (Doeringer & Piore, 1971) for explaining work environment influence on job insecurity. Before, most explanations for this relation were grounded on frameworks linked to perceptions of unpredictability or lack of control (Furda & Meijman, 1992) or Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Thus, the implications of the present dissertation go beyond the choice of antecedents and consequences, it also contributes with theoretical explanations.

Fourthly, our research strengthens the literature by providing evidence which supports earlier findings as well as some theoretical assumptions. At an empirical level, for instance, it supports the predictive power of antecedents which indicate a labour market position such as educational and occupational levels on employability, and job insecurity's detrimental effects on well-being. At a conceptual level, it also has important contributions and insights. For example, it strengthens the concept of job insecurity in its relation to the actual job. It proves to be more strongly linked to the current job than to the worker's career. In contrast, employability's link to career satisfaction suggests it to be a career embedded concept, due to its relation to job transitions rather than to the current job. Furthermore, our results might provide evidence to understand the assumed proactive nature of employability as our findings suggests that core self-evaluations predict employability. Moreover, this result adds to understand that not only variables that reflect a labour market position have an impact on employability. It is noteworthy that the study of personality's link to employability has been constrained to disadvantaged groups, but it has been barely developed with respect to the broader group of workers.

Fifthly, our study strengthens research by providing evidence for new important relations to be considered in the literature. Unexpected findings are particularly interesting in this regard as they raise new avenues for research, such as impression management's positive relation with job insecurity. These results could suggest that impression management might be a consequence of job insecurity rather than an antecedent; job insecure workers might be prone to invest in impression management as a means to gain strength in the face of a weakened labour market position. Thus, impression management may be used by job insecure employees as a protection mechanism.

Sixthly, at the same time, the present dissertation strengthens research by presenting evidence which challenges literature assumptions, thus, contributing to reconsider and dismiss certain assumptions that may hinder future development. In the literature, assumptions are made regarding the relation between employability and job insecurity, even calling employability the new job security. Our results show that employability might be a far more complex phenomenon than job security, and that indeed, job insecurity and employability are not only different concepts, but in addition, they are not part of the same continuum. Another important point which adds up to a further complexity of the employability phenomenon is its simultaneous positive relation with well-being (i.e., career satisfaction) and impaired well-being (cynicism). To sum up, our study adds up in building a stronger research by for instance rethinking some theoretical assumptions (e.g., benefits of employability for the individual), calls for reflection on the new employee-employer relations and the significance of work for the individual.

Finally, the fact that the research takes place in Latin American proves that the concepts work in a different context, i.e. different from Europe and the US. It also supports earlier findings (e.g., detrimental character of job insecurity on well-being, predictor value of occupational position and educational level on employability) and as we have seen in the previous point it puts to the test literature assumptions. It might be said that this dissertation establishes the first stones of a bridge between the European and the Latin American context, more specifically to the Peruvian one.

## **2. PRACTICE**

### **2.1. Job insecurity**

*Who is at risk?*

Our findings suggest that employees characterized by low core self-evaluations, high impression management, high perceived recent organizational changes and high perceived number of unemployed, are more likely to experience job insecurity, whereas being older, not having an additional job and workers with a management position are likely less job insecure.

Identifying workers who are vulnerable to experience job insecurity may be important for prevention strategies. In fact, this identification may help organizations to implement preventive strategies in an effective way. For instance, the influence of perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed might give a hint on which strategies to implement and when are they most necessary. The importance of perceived

organizational changes may hint at the importance of avoiding rumours and to take measures for clear communication in order to prevent rising levels of job insecurity especially in times of organizational changes (De Witte, 2005; Vander Elst, Baillien, De Witte, & De Cuyper, *online publication*). Because rumours are always present, clear communication could be implemented in regular bases, as according to the literature some employees may feel job insecure in a situation which other workers will find harmless (e.g., Sverke et al, 2004).

As regard to personality findings, one must be cautious with these results. It is not our intention to favour discrimination of certain individuals due to their personality traits. This information should be taken as an acknowledgement that some workers may be more vulnerable than others to experience job insecurity, and thus, it might be important to create mechanisms which favour explicit an open communication regarding future events (De Witte, 2005).

#### *What is the risk?*

There is strong evidence based on earlier research and on our findings that job insecure workers are more likely to experience detrimental well-being. As mentioned before, further analyses not accounting for family and work variables also indicate negative consequences on career well-being. Thus, it is important for employees, employers and governmental initiatives to be aware of the negative health-effects of job insecurity. Moreover, its negative effects not only affect work-related well-being but also trespasses the boundaries of work, affecting for instance life satisfaction and psychological distress.

Job insecure workers will experience impaired well-being and thus, their performance might be affected and might originate more organizational costs in the form of absenteeism and lateness (Lim, 1997), and a loss of valuable human resources as workers search and apply for new jobs (Lim, 1997). Moreover, due to the experienced impaired well-being, employees might also have more expenses by attending doctors for instance in the case of psychosomatic complaints. So it is a cost for the employee, employer and in case of health insurance by the state, also for the system, that is, for society as well.

## **2.2. Employability**

#### *Who is most employable?*

Our findings suggest that employees characterized by high core self-evaluations, high impression management, workers with a management position, high perceived number of employment opportunities are more likely to experience employability, whereas being a man,



being older, not having an additional job and less educated workers are likely less employable.

*What are the benefits and risks?*

In the literature, employability was presented as beneficial for individuals (e.g., de Vries et al., 2001). Our research shows a far more complex picture in this regard with regard to external employability. Employability as defined in this dissertation may be beneficial for career satisfaction, but detrimental due to its positive relation to cynicism. Moreover, when elaborating further analyses, employability showed a relation to job dissatisfaction when not accounting for family and work related variables.

It would be interesting to see the relation between employability and turnover intentions (e.g., De Cuyper & De Witte, *in press*; De Cuyper, Van der Heijden, & De Witte, *in press*). If this is the case, it might represent a risk for the employer, in the sense, that it might represent a loss of human resources. In addition, without referring to turnover intentions, highly employable individuals might see a decrease in their productivity due to cynicism towards their work. Thus, the employees might take measures to make the work environment more attractive for individuals who are more employable, which might be attained not only by increasing salaries. This is certainly a matter of present research debate, known as the management paradox (e.g., De Cuyper & De Witte, *in press*; De Cuyper, Van der Heijden, & De Witte, *in press*).

### **3. POLICIES**

We believe our research has important implications at a policy level, as through the comparison between job insecurity and employability, it helps to envision and understand better the new nature of work and its significance for the individual. For instance, our results might be of help in rising awareness regarding the fact that employment problems go beyond unemployment, especially as regards to policies at the Latin American level. In this sense, it might be of help for the initiatives of ILO who's 'decent work' concept starts to give more importance to employment security. Even more, as our results support previous findings regarding job insecurity's detrimental effects on well-being and most importantly, in a non-European context. This could mean that ILO's 'decent work' concept which is based on principles from which policies for international work standards are derived, could find in this research relevant empirical evidence for their policies.

Another interesting example of policy implications could be related to flexicurity. As mentioned in earlier chapters, at the European level there is an ongoing debate regarding this issue and the best way to set common strategies to favour flexicurity amongst Europe. Much of this debate originates in the fact that it is a very complex concept. Since it is not our aim to present the flexicurity idea in detail, we will only highlight some of its aspects which might be relevant for our research. One interesting aspect of flexicurity is that it advances the idea of achieving equilibrium between the need for flexibility and security of employers and employees. Thus, it favours employability as a means of promoting workers flexibility in the labour market. This might be based on literature assumptions which see employability as only beneficial for the worker. Thus, our findings call for reflection on the way some flexicurity strategies might be implemented due to the possible negative costs of employability for the individual (impaired well-being). As mentioned in the previous section, employability might also represent costs for the organizations such as a higher rate of turnover intentions (i.e., the management paradox; De Cuyper & De Witte, *in press*; De Cuyper, Van der Heijden, & De Witte, *in press*).

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

Our main finding is that employability and job insecurity have a negative relation and are two distinct concepts with different relations to their antecedents and consequences. Another important finding is that employability relates positively to both well-being (i.e., career satisfaction) and impaired well-being (e.g., cynicism). Our research findings might have research, practical and policy implications. At a research level it might help to integrate literature about job insecurity and employability, while strengthening it through the comparison of its antecedents and consequences; the fact that the research takes place in Latin American proves that the concepts work in a different context, supporting earlier findings and at the same time challenging literature assumptions. At a practical level, it supports the profile established by previous research of the characteristics of workers who are more likely to experience job insecurity, while extending the profile to identify the employable workers. It also offers information of which consequences and risks job insecurity and employability might present at an individual, organization and at a macro level. It hints towards certain preventive measures to decrease the magnitude of their risks. At a policy level, it helps to understand the new nature of work and its significance for the individual. This knowledge might be of use when implementing policies in the framework for instance of decent work and flexicurity.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Despite our research's limitations, we are confident that we made a valuable contribution to understand the conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between employability and job insecurity. At the same time, we are conscious of the vital importance to continue this line of research as more studies need to be undertaken before the association between employability and job insecurity is more clearly understood. Thus, in this section we suggest future research avenues considering further possibilities of conceptual, theoretical, methodological and contextual developments.

#### **1. CONCEPTUAL: OTHER DIMENSIONS**

As discussed earlier, our job insecurity and employability definitions are based upon choices we made considering the ongoing conceptual debate. As a result, our concepts focus on important dimensions of these phenomena, with the limitation of leaving other interesting dimensions aside. Thus, it might be argued that a further step to advance in the understanding of the association between employability and job insecurity would be to compare more complex definitions of both concepts, that is, definitions which include more dimensions of these phenomena.

##### **1.1. Job insecurity**

We define job insecurity as the employee's perceived probability and fear of losing the current job. As a result, we focus upon a subjective perspective, the internal labour market, with losing as a core element and a multidimensional approach which considers the quantitative, cognitive and affective aspects of job insecurity. Nevertheless, other choices about possible dimensions could have been made. Thus, it is in its dimensions where interesting future avenues of research may arise. Two of the most important dimensions regard quantitative-qualitative and cognitive-affective elements of job insecurity. As discussed earlier quantitative refers to the perceived threat of losing the job itself, while qualitative refers to the loss of valued job features. It would be interesting to study a concept of job insecurity which includes both dimensions. Although the importance of differentiating job insecurity with respect to the job itself or its features was suggested with the first attempt of systematizing job insecurity research (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984), there is still work

to be done in this regard. Perhaps most important is that a clear definition and measure of qualitative job insecurity must be established. To date, there are some measures available (e.g., Hellgren et al., 1999; De Witte, De Cuyper, Handaja, Sverke, Näswall, & Hellgren, 2010), but there is not yet conclusive evidence about the validity of these measures.

Quantitative versus qualitative job insecurity might yield different relations with employability. We established a negative relation between employability and quantitative job insecurity. The relationship between employability and qualitative job insecurity is unclear. Preliminary results that we presented at the EAWOP 2009 Congress (Alarco, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2009), suggest that there is a positive and significant relationship between employability and qualitative job insecurity. The explanation could be that due to their perceived high labour market value, high employable workers might expect more from their jobs in return. Therefore, it could be expected that these employees may be more critical towards the quality of their jobs and hence, express more concerns regarding the future existence of valued job features such as the deterioration of working conditions. However, more studies need to be done in this regard.

In addition, it would be interesting to study if the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of job insecurity might have different antecedents or consequences. For example, our findings showed that perceived organizational changes and perceived number of employees are positively related to quantitative job insecurity. Thus, it could be interesting to study if these antecedents are stronger or weaker predictors of qualitative job insecurity. It could be speculated that perceived recent organizational changes might relate more strongly to qualitative job insecurity than to quantitative job insecurity: organizational changes might imply a change of the job that an individual has to fulfil, it might imply more responsibilities and the loss of certain job features valued by the individual. As regards to consequences, the clear distinction between a quantitative and a qualitative dimension might arise as even more interesting especially considering well-being outcomes. To date, there exist few studies in this regard (e.g., Hellgren, Sverke, & Isaksson, 1999; De Witte, De Cuyper, Handaja, Sverke, Näswall, & Hellgren, 2010), but results are yet inconclusive. Thus, further research is still needed in this regard.

A second interesting avenue for research concerns the study of cognitive and affective as dimensions of job insecurity. There has been some controversy regarding which of these dimensions is the most important for job insecurity. In this regard we see an evolution towards the inclusion of both variables although their relation is not specified (e.g., Sverke et al., 2004). As regards to the US dominant approach, Probst (2003) makes an explicit

distinction of what we could name as cognitive job security and job security satisfaction, being that this last component includes some affective elements. Probst (2003) suggests that cognitive job security could be the antecedent of job security satisfaction. Moreover, in the framework of the Appraisal Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) cognitive job insecurity might be an antecedent of affective job insecurity, implying that only if the employee perceives a high job loss possibility, then feelings of anxiety and fear might rise. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that it may be difficult to distinguish these components empirically: they are likely highly related and follow each other closely in time. Thus, we expect that distinguishing these dimensions may yield very similar results, for example in terms of their relationship with employability, antecedents and consequences. This expectation should however be tested.

## **1.2. Employability**

We define employability as the employee's perceived possibilities of gaining a job in the external labour market. Thus, we focus upon output, subjective, external-quantitative aspects of employability, with gaining as core element. As employability is a far more complex phenomenon to define than job insecurity, this due to the lack of consensus in the field, we will indicate some of the large number of future research avenues which might arise.

An interesting dimension concerns the distinction between internal and external employability. This means that a new job can be gained in the internal labour market (e.g., receiving a promotion) or in the external labour market (i.e., being employed by another company). To begin with, it might be interesting to study if these dimensions relate differently to job insecurity. It might be speculated that the relation between internal employability and job insecurity might be stronger than the one that we found in our study (i.e., with regard to external employability): indeed, job insecurity and internal employability both share a focus upon the internal labour market.

As regards to the antecedents, it would be interesting to compare if the variables of the interplay with their work environment might exert a more powerful influence on internal employability than on external employability. Both dual labour market and human capital variables predict employability, even more that the influence of human capital factors is stronger than the one of dual labour market factors (Berntson et al., 2006a), but thus far, there are no studies which compare their predictive strength on internal or external employability. In addition, we might find a significant relation between perceived number of employees and internal employability as both variables related to the internal labour market, while this

relation is not found in the present study with regard to external employability. But perhaps, the most interesting might be to study internal-external employability with regard to the individual's well-being. It might help us to examine the puzzling relation between employability and well-being. In fact, this would help us to advance understanding on the extent in which employability might be beneficial or detrimental for the individual.

Another interesting avenue is the quantitative-qualitative dimension of employability. The quantitative dimension refers to gaining a job, while the qualitative one refers to gaining a job with specific features. It might be interesting to investigate the relationship between quantitative and qualitative dimensions of job insecurity and of employability. As mentioned before, further analyses which go beyond the aims of the present research showed that while quantitative employability was related negatively to quantitative job insecurity, qualitative employability was related positively to quantitative job insecurity (EAWOP 2009 Congress: Alarco, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2009). In addition, it might be interesting to study the possible relations between quantitative-qualitative employability and qualitative job insecurity. As regards to antecedents, it might be interesting to see if certain personality traits are more linked for instance to qualitative employability. Since Core self-evaluations (Judge et al, 1997) relates to a basic assessment of one's worth, effectiveness and competence, it might be the case that workers with high CSE might experience higher qualitative employability as compared to quantitative employability; high CSE employees might regard themselves as capable of gaining a better job than just another job.

As regards to antecedents, some variables of the interplay with the work environment such as education might have a stronger relation with qualitative employability than with quantitative employability. For instance, employees with characteristic that denote a stronger labour market position might be more selective and thus, be more "sensitive" towards their perceived possibilities of gaining a better job. As regards to well-being outcomes, the examination of quantitative and qualitative employability might yield results which might help to understand the beneficial or detrimental effects of employability. Furthermore, studies could include both quantitative-qualitative and internal-external employability dimensions. De Cuyper and De Witte (2008, in press) provide support for the existence of these four employability types. In line with De Cuyper and De Witte (2008) we are in favour of the development regarding these employability dimensions. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that there may well be other dimensions of employability to study such as valued personal and occupational attributes (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). However, thus far, there is no evidence to support these two dimensions as critical for employability.

## **2. THEORETICAL**

Our research contributes to the empirical evidence about the relationship between employability and job insecurity. A clear next step to advance understanding of this association while contributing to the theoretical development in the field is to study the possible interactions between our main concepts such as the work initiated by Silla and colleagues (Silla et al., 2009) and De Cuyper and colleagues (De Cuyper et al., 2008). Indeed, this is a promising line of research to be followed.

### **2.1. Moderation**

In the job insecurity literature, employability is often mentioned as a relevant resource to cope with job insecurity and thus, to reduce its negative consequences (e.g., Näswall 2004, 2005; Fugate et al., 2004; Forrier & Sels, 2003; Sverke & Hellgren, 2002; Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). This moderation or buffering approach states that when faced with job insecurity, employees with higher employability will experience less negative consequences than those with lower employability. Therefore, an extension of our research would be to test the potential role of employability on the relation between job insecurity and well-being.

This avenue has been explored by Silla and colleagues (2009). The results are promising: the negative relationship between job insecurity and life satisfaction was less strong among highly compared with less employable workers. However, no such association was found with respect to psychological distress. We would like to invite researchers to add further evidence, not only for general well-being but definitely also for work-related well-being (i.e., job satisfaction, career satisfaction, engagement, exhaustion and cynicism). This would also serve to support or instead challenge the findings of Silla and colleagues (2009).

### **2.2. Mediation**

A second approach concerning the relationship between employability and job insecurity is developed by De Cuyper and colleagues (2008). Their mediational approach states employability as a possible antecedent of job insecurity, suggesting that high-employable workers will perceive less job insecurity than low-employable workers. Job insecurity, in turn, relates negatively to well-being. In other words, the authors suggest that less employable workers are likely to be more insecure which then leads to poorer well-being. Or, highly employable workers are likely more secure about their job which then associates with well-being.

Our research might present some empirical evidence for the presence of a meditational approach: (1) there is a negative relation between employability and job insecurity, and (2) there is a negative relationship between job insecurity and well-being. However, a third condition for mediation is that there exists a relationship between employability and well-being. This relationship was found for some well-being measures like career and job satisfaction, but not for most others. An alternative could be to test whether the relationship between employability and well-being is indirect through job insecurity (hence without the third condition for mediation being required).

### **2.3. Spill-over hypothesis**

Research consistently shows a strong correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (De Witte, 2005). According to the spill-over hypothesis (Spector, 1997) job experiences may be carried-over and affect how employees experience their lives. Lim (1997) found empirical support for the spill-over hypothesis. She found that job insecurity affects job satisfaction which then affects life satisfaction. Thus, job insecurity relates to life dissatisfaction because of job satisfaction. In fact, yet stronger evidence for the spill-over hypothesis would be found if the relationship between job insecurity and general well-being disappears once work-related well-being is included in the analysis.

### **2.4. Test the total research model**

A next step that could be taken is to test the research model as a whole. This could be done with a structural equation approach which would include antecedents, job insecurity or employability, and consequences in one analysis.

## **3. METHODOLOGICAL**

### **3.1. Longitudinal studies**

Although the study of employability and job insecurity might carry a high possibility of sample attrition, for future research it is important to have longitudinal studies. This will allow testing for causality. For instance, a longitudinal design will enable future researchers to show that job insecurity affects well-being rather than vice-versa, or that employability affects job insecurity as suggested in the present study. It might be argued that thus far, no studies have analysed the causal relationship between job insecurity and employability.

In addition, a longitudinal design would allow indicating if the relation between job insecurity and employability is stronger or weaker in times of recession. For instance, our data



collection takes place during a time of economic prosperity which might be another explanation for the weak relation found between our main variables. A stronger relation between employability and job insecurity might be expected in times of recession which may be explained in the frame of Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993). It might be expected that in time of recession, through human capital resources such as education, employees will be more prone to affect their security level by seeking and choosing better and more secure jobs. In fact, Berntson and colleagues (Berntson et al., 2006a) found that the predictive strength of human capital antecedents on employability was larger than those of dual labour market antecedents. Taking one step further, it would be relevant to test if employability might be more predictive for well-being in times of recession. It has been suggested that in times of recession high employable workers may feel less vulnerable and still in control of their careers, which will promote a sense of well-being (De Cuyper et al., 2008).

Another avenue would be to test if the relationship between job insecurity and well-being is less strong in times of recession because of a general sense of insecurity. In fact, our study shows that perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed are positively related to job insecurity. In times of recession employees might be more prone to experience job insecurity and as everyone is feeling insecure, employees might be more open to share their feelings and then get social support. Thus, a weaker relation between job insecurity and well-being might be expected during recession.

### **3.2. Representative samples**

Since our research findings show that job insecurity and employability are present in the labour market of Metropolitan Lima, and may affect well-being, the next step would be to work with representative samples as it would allow for the generalization of results to the population. Additionally, an interesting route for future research could be to focus upon specific groups as we have developed further on in the context section.

### **3.3. Other antecedents and/or outcomes**

It might be interesting to expand research on the relation between employability and job insecurity by including additional antecedents and consequences. As regards to antecedents of employability, it might be interesting to study other personality traits which might predict employability. It would be as well interesting to explore in more depth the relation of job insecurity and employability as regards to impression management; as for its relation with job insecurity we found unexpected results. We would be particularly in favour to include

organizational outcomes (i.e., organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviours and turn over intentions) as we think they might help even more to clarify the job insecurity-employability relationship. An interesting initial study in this regard, is the one carried out by Berntson, Näswall and Sverke (2010) who found that job insecurity has a positive stronger association with turn over amongst employable workers. Thus, to study the association between job insecurity and employability considering possible organizational outcomes is indeed a promising research avenue.

#### **4. CONTEXT**

We believe that one of the most important contributions of the present study is that we have introduced job insecurity and employability in the Peruvian context. We obviously promote the continuance of this research line in this context and in Latin America in general, where the topics of job insecurity and employability are understudied (See Conceptual Debate Chapter). It is vital to advance at the theoretical-conceptual level while at the same time setting up research avenues which might be particularly attractive for policy makers so as to bridge science and practice.

A first step to achieve this goal could be to focus upon specific groups which characterize the Peruvian labour context such as the underemployed. In Peru, underemployment is defined differently than in Europe. Visible underemployment refers to employees who work involuntary less than 35 hours per week, while invisible underemployment considers those who work more than 35 hours per week but receive less than the minimum wage (INEI, 2008). Moreover, underemployment is by far a more serious problem than unemployment which amounts to only 6% of the Peruvian working population (INEI, 2008). Although updated figures on underemployment at a national level are difficult to find, we can access this information at the level of the labour market of Metropolitan Lima. During March-May 2008, almost half of the employed in the labour market of Metropolitan Lima (48,9%) were classified as underemployed, that is, without an adequate job (INEI, 2008).

In order to understand the impaired consequences of underemployment, we might refer to a more general phenomenon which is precarious employment. It might be argued that the two definitions of underemployment are indirect measures of precarious work, a phenomenon which is very difficult to measure as it is frequently totally or partially illegal (Galín, 1986). Precarious employment refers to atypical work arrangements which imply the lack of a full-time job (i.e., visible underemployment) with only one employer and the lack of protection by

the legislation or negotiation party (Galin, 1986). Moreover, this lack of protection implies that precarious employees might be more vulnerable to insecurity, to have poor and risky work conditions, no health coverage and to receive a poor salary (i.e., invisible underemployment) (Galin, 1986). Precarious employment is not limited to the informal sector but it is a phenomenon which might be seen in medium and big companies, as well as in highly productive economic activities (Galin, 1986). Taking into consideration the above, the underemployed rise as a very interesting and very different context to test the strength of our concepts, widen up the scope of their dimensions (e.g., quantitative-qualitative dimensions), understand the relation between job insecurity and employability, their antecedents and their consequences.

The presented future avenues to be studied amongst the underemployed could also be recommended upon specific groups who have been receiving attention from governmental initiatives as for example employees of micro-enterprises (i.e., companies with less than 10 employees) and youngsters. It might be added that one of the reasons for the interest in these two groups is grounded on the assumption that employees from micro-enterprises and youngsters might be more vulnerable to underemployment. Moreover, micro-enterprises provide jobs to 76,8% of the Peruvian working population; 67,7% are employed in micro-enterprises of 1 to 5 workers, and 9,1% are employed in micro-enterprises of 6 to 10 workers (INEI, 2008). As regards to youngsters, 27,6% of the Peruvian population are between 15 and 29 years old (INEI, 2010).

To sum up, we are convinced that the characteristics of the Peruvian labour Market, beginning with Metropolitan Lima, rise as an interest context to put to the test our concepts and their relation.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

As shown in the present section this research represents a first step to advance understanding about the association between employability and job insecurity. To favour conceptual development we consider it important to include the analyses of additional dimensions of job insecurity and employability such as the quantitative-qualitative components, as they might yield different results. To advance on a theoretical level studies which consider the mediation and moderation mechanisms between both variables are highly recommended, in addition to extend the test of the spill-over hypothesis. As regards to methodological issues to favour the establishment of causal relations longitudinal studies are of vital importance. We also recommend addressing representative samples and to widen the

scope of the considered antecedents and especially of potential consequences. Finally, we give some recommendations to concentrate on specific groups of the Peruvian context. Our long term objective is to promote this line of research in Latin America, while strengthening the test of our concepts and calling the attention of policy makers in a topic of such particular relevance as employability and job insecurity.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

In this dissertation, we have accomplished the aims of our project: namely (1) to present an employability concept in parallel with an earlier job insecurity definition, (2) to establish the conceptual and empirical relation between these two concepts, (3) to investigate the antecedents of job insecurity and employability, and (4) to study their consequences on employees' well-being. We applied our research in Lima, Peru, in a sample of 651 employees from 8 organisations. This context is a particular strength: most job insecurity and employability research comes from Europe or the US.

Regarding our first aim, we have defined job insecurity as “the employee’s perceived probability and fear of losing the current job”, and likewise, we have defined employability as “the employee’s perceived possibilities to make job transition, that is, to gain a job in the external labour market”. The main conceptual similarities are that they are subjective phenomena and concern the future. However, whereas job insecurity focuses on the present job and the internal labour market, employability concentrates on a potential new job and the external labour market.

Regarding our second aim, our findings support our view of employability and job insecurity as two distinct concepts. Results support our hypothesis regarding their negative relation albeit this association was fairly weak. These findings are comparable with recent research (Berntson, Sverke, & Näswall, 2010; De Cuyper et al., 2008). The absence of a stronger correlation might indicate that job insecurity and employability are not part of the same continuum. On the contrary, they are two distinct concepts along, for example, their focus upon losing versus gaining, or upon the internal versus the external labour market. This might also indicate that although employability might be an alternative for job insecurity, it might be simplistic to call it the new job security, as this term may be failing in understanding the nature of employability.

As regards to antecedents, our third aim, our findings suggest that job insecurity and employability share some predictors. For some variables, even the direction of relationships is similar: not having another job relates negatively to both job insecurity and employability, while impression management relates positively to both concepts. For other variables, however, the direction is different: core self-evaluations and occupational level relate negatively to job insecurity but positively to employability. At the same time, our findings

show that neither family related variables nor perceived number of employees are associated with job insecurity or employability. Other antecedents are more relevant to employability than to job insecurity, or vice versa. For example, based on these results and on earlier findings, it might be suggested that educational level is a stronger predictor of employability than of job insecurity. Similarly, perceived number of employment opportunities relates to employability but not to job insecurity. In contrast, perceived recent organizational changes and perceived number of unemployed are related to job insecurity but not employability. To sum up, it might be suggested that while personality is the most important predictor of job insecurity, work-related variables appear to be the major antecedents for employability.

As regards to our fourth aim, consequences, job insecurity proved to be a good predictor as well as detrimental for employee's work related well-being (i.e., with the exception of career satisfaction). In contrast, employability showed to be a predictor only for career satisfaction. In addition, job insecurity is significantly related with general well-being, while no such association is found with employability. It might be that while the effects of job insecurity might concern the actual job, employability might be related to an individual's career development due to its focus on job transitions. To sum up, our research supports previous findings regarding job insecurity's detrimental influence on well-being. At the same time and rather unexpectedly, our empirical findings indicate that the relationship between employability and well-being is far more complex, challenging the emphasis that is given to the employability's benefits for the workers (e.g., de Vries, Gründemann, & Van Vuuren, 2001).

In conclusion, despite the conceptual and methodological limitations of our study (see part 4, chapter 2), the present dissertation is of value for research, practice and policy. Our work contributes to understand that job insecurity and employability are two distinctive concepts with a negative relation, while integrating both research fields. A stronger research field is built by providing conceptual clarity and support for earlier empirical findings, by introducing theoretical frameworks, by extending the scope of possible antecedents and consequences, by challenging some theoretical assumptions (e.g., benefits of employability for the individual), and calling for reflection on the new employee-employer relations and the significance of work for the employee. Moreover, our research proves that the employability and job insecurity concepts work in a non European and non US context, while establishing an initial bridge between the European research and the Latin American context, more specifically to the one of Metropolitan Lima. At a practical level, it supports the profile established by previous research of the characteristics of workers who are more likely to

experience job insecurity, while extending the profile to identify the employable workers. It also offers information of which consequences and risks job insecurity and employability might present at an individual, organization and at a macro level. It hints towards certain preventive measures to decrease the magnitude of their risks. At a policy level, it helps to understand, in a particular group of workers, the new nature of work and its significance for the individual. This knowledge might be of use when implementing policies in the framework for instance of decent work and flexicurity. To sum up, the above mentioned contributions highlight the relevance of our research topic in different areas. We therefore invite researchers to further investigate job insecurity and employability along the routes suggested in “Avenues for Future Research” (Part 4, Chapter 4).





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## **APPENDIX**

Appendix A  
Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Job Insecurity.

|   | Factor loadings |
|---|-----------------|
| Item  | Job Insecurity  |
| I think I might lose my job in the near future (psycones) | .85             |
| I feel insecure about the future of my job (psycones)     | .79             |
| Chances are, I will soon lose my job (psycones)           | .76             |
| I am afraid I will get fired                              | .67             |
| I worry about keeping my job                              | .43             |
| % variance  | 50.91           |
| Alpha   | .73             |
| M   | 2.36            |
| SD  | .81             |



## Appendix B

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Employability.

|  |  | Factor Loadings |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Item   |  | Employability   |
| I can easily find another job elsewhere instead of my present job          |  | .87             |
| I am confident that I could quickly gain another job with another employer |  | .85             |
| I could easily switch to another employer, if I wanted to                  |  | .83             |
| I have a good chance of getting a job elsewhere, if I looked for one       |  | .80             |
| % variance   |  | 70.27           |
| alpha  |  | .86             |
| M  |  | 3.25            |
| SD   |  | .83             |

## Appendix C

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Core-Self Evaluations.

| Item   | Factor loadings |
|--|-----------------|
|  | CSE             |
| I do not feel in control of my success in my career (r)              | .66             |
| There are times when things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me (r) | .64             |
| Sometimes when I fail I feel worthless (r)                           | .63             |
| Sometimes, I do not feel in control of my work (r)                   | .63             |
| Sometimes I feel depressed (r)                                       | .61             |
| Overall, I am satisfied with myself                                  | .57             |
| I am filled with doubts about my competence (r)                      | .55             |
| I complete tasks successfully  | .51             |
| I am confident I get the success I deserve in life                   | .50             |
| When I try, I generally succeed                                      | .48             |
| I am capable of coping with most of my problems                      | .47             |
| I determine what will happen in my life                              | .35             |
| % variance   | 31.02           |
| Alpha  | .79             |
| M  | 3.84            |
| SD   | .50             |

Appendix D  
Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Impression Management.

|   | Factor loadings |
|---|-----------------|
| Item  | CSE             |
| I try to modify my behaviours to give good images to my boss              | .78             |
| It is important to me to give a good impression to my boss                | .76             |
| I intend to change my behaviours to create a good impression on my boss   | .75             |
| I am sensitive to the impression about me that my boss has                | .74             |
| I like to present myself to my boss as being friendly and a polite person | .71             |
| I try to create the impression that I am a “good” person to my supervisor | .68             |
| % variance  | 54.04           |
| Alpha   | .83             |
| M   | 3.33            |
| SD  | .80             |

## Appendix E

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Job Satisfaction and Career Satisfaction.

| Item                                     | Factor Loadings     |                  |
|--|---------------------|------------------|
|  | Career Satisfaction | Job Satisfaction |
| The advancement of my career             | .89                 |                  |
| What I have achieved in my career        | .87                 |                  |
| The development of skills in my career   | .84                 |                  |
| My career                                | .77                 |                  |
| The wage progress of my career           | .73                 |                  |
| I am often bored with my job (r)         |                     | .81              |
| I am not happy with my job (r)           |                     | .73              |
| I find enjoyment in my job               |                     | .72              |
| Most days I am enthusiastic about my job |                     | .70              |
| % variance                               | 46.35               | 18.40            |
| alpha                                    | .89                 | .75              |
| M  | 3.71                | 4.05             |
| SD                                       | .80                 | .67              |

## Appendix F

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Engagement, Exhaustion and Cynicism (N=648).

| Item   | Factor Loadings |               |             |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | Engagement      | Exhaustion-BO | Cynicism-BO |
| I am enthusiastic about my job ( <i>DE</i> )                                     | .80             |               |             |
| My job inspires me ( <i>DE</i> )   | .80             |               |             |
| When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work ( <i>VI</i> )            | .77             |               |             |
| At my job, I feel strong and vigorous ( <i>VI</i> )                              | .76             |               |             |
| At my work, I feel bursting with energy ( <i>VI</i> )                            | .75             |               |             |
| I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose ( <i>DE</i> )              | .75             |               |             |
| I am proud on the work that I do ( <i>DE</i> )                                   | .73             |               |             |
| To me, my job is challenging ( <i>DE</i> )                                       | .71             |               |             |
| At my job, I am very resilient, mentally ( <i>VI</i> )                           | .68             |               |             |
| I can continue working for very long periods at a time ( <i>VI</i> )             | .66             |               |             |
| At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well ( <i>VI</i> )     | .52             |               |             |
| I feel used up at the end of a working day                                       |                 | .86           |             |
| I feel emotionally drained by my job   |                 | .84           |             |
| I feel tired when I get up in the morning and I have to face another day at work |                 | .75           |             |
| Working all daylong is really a strain for me                                    |                 | .73           |             |
| I feel burned out from my job  |                 | .72           |             |
| I have become more cynical about the potential usefulness of my job              |                 |               | .84         |
| I have become less enthusiastic about my job                                     |                 |               | .84         |
| I doubt about the transcendence and value of my job                              |                 |               | .81         |
| I have become less interested in my work since I began this job                  |                 |               | .80         |
| % variance   | 38.56           | 16.75         | 8.30        |
| alpha  | .91             | .90           | .88         |
| M  | 5.00            | .81           | 2.15        |
| SD   | .83             | 1.16          | 1.26        |

*Note:* BO= burnout; VI= vigor; DE = dedication

## Appendix G

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Life Satisfaction.

|  | Factor Loadings   |
|--|-------------------|
| Item                                       | Life Satisfaction |
| Your work-life balance?                    | .84               |
| Your life in general?                      | .77               |
| Your leisure time?                         | .77               |
| Your state of health and well-being?       | .76               |
| Your family life?                          | .73               |
| The financial situation of your household? | .62               |
| % variance                                 | 56.23             |
| alpha                                      | .84               |
| M  | 5.28              |
| SD   | .99               |

## Appendix H

### Summary of Principal Component Analysis for Psychological Distress.

| Item  | Factor Loadings        |
|---|------------------------|
|   | Psychological Distress |
| Been feeling unhappy and depressed? (r)               | .75                    |
| Felt constantly under strain? (r)                     | .68                    |
| Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties? (r)     | .68                    |
| Been losing confidence in yourself? (r)               | .62                    |
| Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? | .59                    |
| Lost much sleep over worry? (r)                       | .57                    |
| Been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing?    | .51                    |
| Felt that you are playing a useful part in things?    | .48                    |
| Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person? (r)  | .47                    |
| Been feeling reasonably happy all things considered?  | .48                    |
| Been able to face up to your problems?                | .47                    |
| Felt capable of making decisions about things?        | .44                    |
| % variance  | 32.3                   |
| alpha   | .81                    |
| M   | 9.35                   |
| SD  | 4.67                   |

# Appendix I

Participating Organizations according to Gender, Type of Contract and Occupational Position in percentages (N=651).

| Organizations |                           |   | Questionnaires (%) |      |                  |                |                 |                |
|---------------|---------------------------|---|--------------------|------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Name          | Economic Sector           | Main Activity   | Gender             |      | Type of contract |                | Occupation      |                |
|               |                           |   | Women              | Men  | Perma-<br>nent   | Tem-<br>porary | White<br>collar | Blue<br>collar |
| A             | Private-Service           | Commercialization of fuels and lubricants                         | 27.1               | 72.9 | 90.0             | 10.0           | 33.3            | 66.7           |
| B             | Private-<br>Manufacturing | Production and sale of solutions for transport of fluids          | 10.0               | 90.0 | 57.6             | 42.4           | 44.6            | 55.4           |
| C             | Private-Service           | Commercialization of office goods                                 | 58.7               | 41.3 | 61.9             | 38.1           | 85.2            | 14.8           |
| D             | Private-Service           | Representation of producers of heavy machinery and small vehicles | 23.8               | 76.2 | 23.9             | 76.1           | 78.4            | 21.6           |
| E             | Private-<br>Manufacturing | Textile company   | 8.0                | 92.0 | 27.0             | 73.0           | 17.6            | 82.4           |
| F             | Public                    | Public Sector – Research unit of the Ministry of Education        | 48.1               | 51.9 | 3.7              | 96.3           | 96.0            | 4.0            |
| G             | Private-Service           | Commercialization of chemical products                            | 28.8               | 71.2 | 88.5             | 11.5           | 52.9            | 47.1           |
| H             | Private-Service           | Commercialization of goods for the textile industry               | 38.9               | 61.1 | 83.3             | 16.7           | 94.4            | 5.6            |



## Appendix J

### Similarities and Differences between Metropolitan Lima's Working Population and the Research's Sample.

|                              |                   | Metropolitan<br>Lima (%) | Sample<br>(%) |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Size of private organization | Big or medium     | 28.4                     | 92.9          |
|                              | Small             | 10.2                     | 2.8           |
|                              | Micro             | 61.4                     | 0.0           |
| Economic sector              | services          | 74.6                     | 51.7          |
|                              | manufacturing     | 16.6                     | 44.0          |
|                              | construction      | 7.1                      | 0.0           |
| Gender                       | Woman             | 44.0                     | 23.0          |
|                              | Man               | 56.0                     | 77.0          |
| Age                          | 24 or less        | 22.7                     | 12.0          |
|                              | 25 – 44 years old | 53.6                     | 71.9          |
|                              | More than 45      | 23.7                     | 16.1          |
| Educational level            | Low               | 61.0                     | 31.0          |
|                              | High              | 39.0                     | 69.0          |
| Weekly working hours         | More than 40      | 64.6                     | 91.1          |
|                              | Less than 40      | 35.4                     | 8.9           |

## Appendix K

Similarities and Differences between Big and Medium Organizations of Metropolitan Lima and the Research's Sample.

|                   |       | Big and medium orgs. of<br>M. Lima (%) | Sample (%) |
|-------------------|-------|--|------------|
| Gender            | Woman | 32.2                                   | 23.0       |
|                   | Man   | 37.9                                   | 77.0       |
| Educational level | Low   | 46.0                                   | 31.0       |
|                   | High  | 54.0                                   | 69.0       |

## Appendix L



FACULTAD DE PSICOLOGIA Y PEDAGOGIA  
GRUPO DE INVESTIGACION SOBRE PSICOLOGIA DEL TRABAJO, DE  
LA ORGANIZACION Y DEL PERSONAL  
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UNIVERSIDAD  
CATÓLICA DE  
LOVAINA

## **CUESTIONARIO: PERCEPCIONES SOBRE EL TRABAJO**

Su participación en esta investigación es confidencial y anónima.

## *Lea atentamente las instrucciones antes de contestar el cuestionario*

*Estimado participante:*

*Este cuestionario es parte de una investigación de la Universidad Católica de Lovaina (Bélgica) que busca conocer la opinión de los trabajadores sobre su trabajo, la empresa y el mercado laboral de hoy en día. USTED, como empleado, es nuestra fuente más importante de información. Por ello:*

***¡Su participación en esta investigación es sumamente importante!***

*Por favor, conteste todas las preguntas sin dejar ninguna en blanco. Terminar de responderlas no toma más de 45 minutos. Preste atención pues las páginas del cuestionario han sido impresas por ambos lados. No hay respuesta correcta ni incorrecta; lo que cuenta es su opinión. Responda trazando una "x" en la respuesta que crea más conveniente, tal y como se muestra en los siguientes ejemplos:*

*1. Usted es...*

☒ *mujer*

☐ *hombre*

| <b>2. Indique en qué medida está de acuerdo con la siguiente afirmación</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo                          | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Soy feliz en mi trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 5                     |

*Deseamos recalcar que su participación en este estudio es anónima: todos los datos se tratan de manera confidencial y las respuestas individuales no serán reportadas. Si tiene preguntas u observaciones sobre este cuestionario o si tiene deseos de conocer más sobre este estudio, por favor no dude en contactarnos:*

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***¡Muchas Gracias por su Colaboración!***

## I. Información general sobre su trabajo

1. ¿Cuál es su puesto de trabajo en esta organización? (por ejemplo, vendedor, operario, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Cómo clasificaría su trabajo en esta empresa?

(Por favor, al clasificar su trabajo sólo considere las tareas y actividades que actualmente desempeña y no su nivel de estudios).

- ☐ Trabajador operario no calificado (p.e. trabajador de una línea de montaje...)
- ☐ Trabajador operario calificado o capataz (p.e. electricista, montador, técnico...)
- ☐ Trabajador de oficina – nivel básico (p.e. secretaria, vendedor, técnico informático...)
- ☐ Trabajador de oficina – nivel intermedio – o supervisor de trabajadores de oficina (p.e. representante comercial, operador informático...)
- ☐ Trabajador profesional – nivel superior – o encargado (p.e. director de tienda, director de oficina, ingeniero...)
- ☐ Director o administrador (p.e. director de departamento...)

3. ¿Aproximadamente, cuántas horas trabaja a la semana en esta empresa? \_\_\_\_\_ horas semanales

4. ¿Cuánto tiempo lleva trabajando en esta empresa? \_\_\_\_\_ años (si es menos de un año: \_\_\_\_\_ meses o \_\_\_\_\_ días)

5. ¿Qué tipo de contrato tiene usted con esta empresa?

- ☐ Permanente
- ☐ Temporal

6. ¿Además de este trabajo, tiene otro empleo remunerado?

☐ No ☐

Sí: ¿Aproximadamente, cuántas horas a la semana trabaja en ese otro trabajo? \_\_\_\_\_ horas semanales

## II. Características de su trabajo actual

7. ¿Cómo describiría su trabajo actual?

|   | Rara vez o nunca | Con poca frecuencia | A veces | Con bastante frecuencia | Muy frecuentemente o siempre |
|---|------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) Puedo planificar mi propio trabajo   | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| b) Puedo realizar mi trabajo de la manera que crea más conveniente                  | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| c) Puedo escoger las tareas a realizar en mi trabajo                                | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| d) Puedo cambiar la forma de hacer mi trabajo                                       | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| e) Puedo influir en la forma de organizar la sección/departamento en el que trabajo | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| f) En mi trabajo es necesario que sea creativo                                      | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| g) Tengo la oportunidad de perfeccionar mis habilidades                             | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |

| ... ¿Cómo describiría su trabajo actual?                              | Rara vez o nunca | Con poca frecuencia | A veces | Con bastante frecuencia | Muy frecuentemente o siempre |
|---|------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| h) Para realizar mi trabajo es necesario un alto nivel de habilidades | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| i) En mi trabajo es necesario que aprenda cosas nuevas                | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |

| 8. En relación a su actual trabajo, ¿Con qué frecuencia...                                       | Rara vez o nunca | Con poca frecuencia | A veces | Con bastante frecuencia | Muy frecuentemente o siempre |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) se ha sentido presionado por la falta de tiempo?  | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| b) ha tenido menos tiempo de descanso durante su jornada laboral porque tenía demasiado trabajo? | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| c) llega tarde a casa porque tiene demasiado trabajo?  | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |
| d) tiene que trabajar a un ritmo rápido?   | 1                | 2                   | 3       | 4                       | 5                            |

| 9. A continuación le presentamos una lista de aspectos relacionados con su última semana de trabajo. A su juicio, ¿En qué medida ha realizado satisfactoriamente las siguientes tareas? | Muy mal | Mal | Ni bien ni mal | Bien | Muy bien |
|---|---------|-----|----------------|------|----------|
| a) Tomar decisiones   | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |
| b) Trabajar sin cometer errores   | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |
| c) Dedicarse a su trabajo   | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |
| d) Conseguir sus objetivos  | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |
| e) Tomar la iniciativa  | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |
| f) Asumir responsabilidades   | 1       | 2   | 3              | 4    | 5        |

| 10. Indique en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones                         | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Normalmente puedo manejar cualquier problema que se me presenta en mi trabajo                  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Cuando me enfrente con un problema en mi trabajo, normalmente se me ocurren varias soluciones  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Permanezco tranquilo cuando me enfrente a dificultades en mi trabajo porque confío en mi mismo | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |



| <b>11. Por favor, lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta e indique si se ha sentido de esta forma.</b> |  | Nunca<br>(Ninguna vez) | Casi nunca<br>(pocas veces al año) | Algunas veces<br>(una vez al mes o menos) | Regularmente<br>(pocas veces al mes) | Bastante a veces<br>(una vez por semana) | Casi siempre<br>(varias veces por semana) | Siempre<br>(todos los días) |
|--|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| a)   | En mi trabajo me siento lleno de energía   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| b)   | Mi trabajo está lleno de significado y propósito   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| c)   | Soy fuerte y vigoroso en mi trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| d)   | Estoy entusiasmado con mi trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| e)   | Mi trabajo me inspira  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| f)   | Cuando me levanto por las mañanas tengo ganas de ir a trabajar                           | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| g)   | Estoy orgulloso del trabajo que hago   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| h)   | Puedo continuar trabajando durante largos períodos de tiempo                             | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| i)   | Mi trabajo tiene retos   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| j)   | Soy muy persistente en mi trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| k)   | Incluso cuando las cosas no van bien, continúo trabajando                                | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| l)   | Estoy emocionalmente agotado por mi trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| m)   | Estoy agotado al final de un día de trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| n)   | Estoy cansado cuando me levanto por la mañana y tengo que afrontar otro día en mi puesto | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| o)   | Trabajar todo el día es una tensión para mí  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| p)   | Estoy “desgastado” por el trabajo  | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| q)   | He perdido interés por mi trabajo desde que empecé en este puesto                        | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| r)   | He perdido entusiasmo por mi trabajo   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| s)   | Quiero simplemente hacer mi trabajo y no ser molestado                                   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| t)   | Me he vuelto más cínico respecto a la utilidad de mi trabajo                             | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |
| u)   | Dudo de la trascendencia y valor de mi trabajo   | 0                      | 1                                  | 2   | 3                                    | 4  | 5   | 6                           |

| <b>12. Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Existe posibilidades de que pronto pierda mi trabajo                                    | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Estoy seguro/a de que puedo conservar mi trabajo  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Me siento inseguro/a sobre el futuro de mi trabajo                                      | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Creo que podría perder mi trabajo en un futuro próximo                                  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e) Tengo miedo de ser despedido  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f) Me preocupa poder conservar mi trabajo  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

| <b>13. Las siguientes afirmaciones se refieren a las <u>características y condiciones</u> de su trabajo como por ejemplo, realizar un trabajo interesante, la carga laboral, su sueldo, la relación con su supervisor y compañeros de trabajo, etc. Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con dichas afirmaciones</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Creo que mi trabajo cambiará para peor   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Me siento inseguro/a sobre las características y condiciones de mi trabajo en el futuro  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Me preocupa cómo será mi trabajo en el futuro  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Existen posibilidades de que mi trabajo cambie de una manera negativa  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

| <b>14. Creo que los siguientes aspectos de mi trabajo <u>cambiarán para peor</u> en el futuro próximo</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Mi remuneración  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Mi seguridad laboral   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) El grado en el cual puedo usar mis habilidades en mi trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) El contenido de mi trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e) La relación con mi supervisor inmediato  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f) La relación con mis colegas  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| g) Mis oportunidades de ser promovido   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| h) El grado de autonomía con el que trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| i) La presión de mi carga de trabajo  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| j) Las horas de trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| k) Las condiciones físicas de mi trabajo  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

### III. Opiniones sobre su trabajo, su empresa y el mercado laboral

| 15. Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones |  | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a)  | Me complace saber que mi trabajo ha contribuido al bien de la empresa                                  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b)  | Me siento parte de la empresa  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c)  | Incluso si esta organización no marchara bien, sería reactio/a a cambiar de organización               | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d)  | En mi trabajo, me gusta sentir que estoy esforzándome no sólo por mí, sino también por mi organización | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e)  | Estoy muy orgulloso/a de decirle a la gente la empresa en la que trabajo                               | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f)  | Mi supervisor me ayuda en la realización de mi trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| g)  | Mi supervisor presta atención a lo que le digo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| h)  | Mi supervisor se preocupa por el bienestar de sus trabajadores   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| i)  | Me siento apreciado por mi supervisor  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

**16. A continuación encontrará algunas afirmaciones sobre sus posibilidades de ganar: otro trabajo o uno mejor, DENTRO de la empresa en la que actualmente labora. Al usar el término “AQUÍ” nos referimos a esta empresa.**

| Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones |   | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a)  | Tengo muchas posibilidades de conseguir <u>otro trabajo</u> aquí, si lo buscara         | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b)  | Tengo muchas posibilidades de conseguir un <u>mejor trabajo</u> aquí, si lo buscara     | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c)  | Fácilmente, puedo encontrar <u>otro trabajo</u> aquí, en lugar del que tengo ahora      | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d)  | Fácilmente, puedo encontrar un <u>mejor trabajo</u> aquí, en lugar del que tengo ahora  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e)  | Podría cambiar fácilmente <u>de trabajo</u> aquí, si yo lo quisiera                     | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f)  | Podría cambiar fácilmente a un <u>trabajo mejor</u> aquí, si yo lo quisiera             | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| g)  | Estoy seguro de que yo podría rápidamente ganar <u>otro trabajo</u> en esta empresa     | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| h)  | Estoy seguro de que yo podría rápidamente ganar un <u>mejor trabajo</u> en esta empresa | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

**17. A continuación encontrará algunas afirmaciones sobre sus posibilidades de ganar: otro trabajo o uno mejor, en OTRA empresa.**

| Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones                       | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Tengo muchas posibilidades de conseguir <u>otro trabajo</u> en otra empresa, si buscara alguno     | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Tengo muchas posibilidades de conseguir un <u>mejor trabajo</u> en otra empresa, si buscara alguno | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Fácilmente, puedo encontrar <u>otro trabajo</u> en otra empresa, en lugar del que tengo ahora      | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Fácilmente, puedo encontrar un <u>mejor trabajo</u> en otra empresa, en lugar del que tengo ahora  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e) Podría cambiar fácilmente <u>de trabajo</u> a otra empresa, si yo lo quisiera                      | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f) Podría cambiar fácilmente a un <u>trabajo mejor</u> en otra empresa, si yo lo quisiera             | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| g) Estoy seguro de que yo podría rápidamente ganar <u>otro trabajo</u> en otra empresa                | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| h) Estoy seguro de que yo podría rápidamente ganar un <u>mejor trabajo</u> en otra empresa            | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

**18. Por favor, indique en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.**

|  | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Últimamente, tengo bastantes ganas de abandonar esta organización   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) A pesar de las obligaciones que tengo con esta empresa, quiero abandonar mi trabajo lo más pronto posible | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Me gustaría permanecer en esta organización el mayor tiempo posible                                       | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Si pudiera dejaría hoy mismo este trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

**19. A continuación, se presentan afirmaciones respecto a su trabajo y a su supervisor inmediato. Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con dichas afirmaciones.**

**En mi trabajo...**

| Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) Intento cambiar mi comportamiento para crear una buena impresión en mi jefe | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b) Trato de modificar mi comportamiento para dar una buena imagen a mi jefe    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c) Para mí es importante dar una buena impresión a mi jefe                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d) Me gusta presentarme ante mi jefe como una persona amigable y educada       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e) Soy sensible a la impresión que de mí tenga mi jefe                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f) Trato de crear en mi jefe la impresión de que soy una buena persona         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

20. ¿En los últimos tres años ha habido cambios en el número de trabajadores de esta empresa?

- ☐ Sí, ha aumentado el número de trabajadores
- ☐ Sí, ha disminuido el número de trabajadores
- ☐ No, no ha habido cambios importantes en el número de trabajadores

21. En los próximos tres años, usted espera que el número de trabajadores de esta organización...

- ☐ aumente
- ☐ se mantenga
- ☐ disminuya

22. ¿En los últimos seis meses ha habido procesos de re-estructuración (p.e. recorte de personal) dentro de esta empresa?

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

23. ¿En los últimos tres años ha habido cambios en el número de desempleados en el Perú?

- ☐ Sí, ha aumentado el número de desempleados
- ☐ Sí, ha disminuido el número de desempleados
- ☐ No, no ha habido cambios importantes en el número de desempleados

24. En los próximos tres años, usted espera que el número de desempleados en el Perú...

- ☐ aumente
- ☐ se mantenga
- ☐ disminuya

25. En el Perú, durante los últimos tres años las oportunidades laborales para gente de su profesión o que desempeña su tipo de trabajo...

- ☐ ha aumentado
- ☐ se ha mantenido
- ☐ ha disminuido

26. En el Perú, durante los próximos tres años las oportunidades laborales para gente de su profesión o que desempeña su tipo de trabajo...

- ☐ aumentará
- ☐ se mantendrá
- ☐ disminuirá

27. ¿En los últimos tres años ha habido cambios en el número de desempleados en la ciudad en la que trabaja?

- ☐ Sí, ha aumentado el número de desempleados
- ☐ Sí, ha disminuido el número de desempleados

- ☐ No, no ha habido cambios importantes en el número de desempleados

**28. En los próximos tres años, usted espera que el número de desempleados en la ciudad en la que trabaja...**

- ☐ aumente  
☐ se mantenga  
☐ disminuya

**29. En la ciudad en la que trabaja, durante los últimos tres años las oportunidades laborales para gente de su profesión o que desempeña su tipo trabajo...**

- ☐ ha aumentado  
☐ se ha mantenido  
☐ ha disminuido

**30. En la ciudad en la que trabaja, durante los próximos tres años las oportunidades laborales para gente de su profesión o que desempeña su tipo trabajo...**

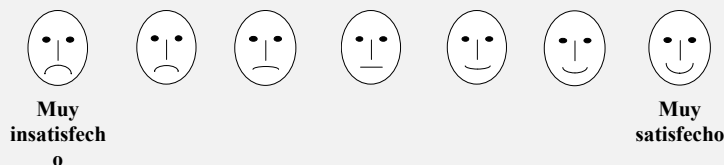
- ☐ aumentará  
☐ se mantendrá  
☐ disminuirá

## IV. Salud y bienestar

| <b>31. Indique en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) <u>No</u> estoy contento con mi trabajo                                       | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Con frecuencia me aburro en mi trabajo  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) La mayoría de los días estoy entusiasmado/a con mi trabajo                    | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Disfruto con mi trabajo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

| <b>32. Señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|--|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Estoy satisfecho/a con...</b>   |                          |               |   |            |                       |
| a) mi carrera  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) los logros obtenidos en mi carrera  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) el desarrollo económico de mi carrera   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) el progreso de mi carrera   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e) el desarrollo de habilidades en mi carrera                                    | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |

**33. ¿Cuán satisfecho/a está actualmente con respecto a...**



|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) su vida en general?                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| b) su vida familiar?                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| c) su tiempo libre?                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| d) su estado de salud y bienestar?           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| e) el equilibrio entre su vida y su trabajo? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| f) la situación financiera en su hogar?      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**34. Nos gustaría saber si tiene algún problema médico y cómo ha sido su estado de salud, en general, durante las últimas semanas. Por favor, conteste las siguientes preguntas marcando la respuesta que mejor puede aplicarse a usted.**

| Últimamente...  | Mucho menos que lo habitual | Menos que lo habitual | Igual que lo habitual | Más que lo habitual |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| a) ¿Ha podido concentrarse bien en lo que hacía?                          | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |
| b) ¿Ha sentido que está desempeñando un papel útil en la vida?            | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |
| c) ¿Se ha sentido capaz de tomar decisiones?                              | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |
| d) ¿Ha sido capaz de disfrutar de sus actividades normales de cada día?   | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |
| e) ¿Ha sido capaz de hacer frente adecuadamente a sus problemas?          | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |
| f) ¿Se siente razonablemente feliz considerando todas las circunstancias? | 1                           | 2                     | 3                     | 4                   |

**35. Últimamente...**

|  | No, en absoluto | No más que lo habitual | Algo más que lo habitual | Mucho más que lo habitual |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) ¿Sus preocupaciones le han hecho perder mucho sueño?                | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |
| b) ¿Ha notado que se encuentra constantemente agobiado/a y en tensión? | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |
| c) ¿Ha tenido la sensación de que no puede superar sus dificultades?   | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |
| d) ¿Se ha sentido poco feliz o deprimido/a?                            | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |
| e) ¿Ha perdido confianza en sí mismo/a?                                | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |
| f) ¿Ha pensado que es una persona que no vale para nada?               | 1               | 2                      | 3                        | 4                         |

| <b>36. Por favor, señale en qué medida está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.</b> | Totalmente en desacuerdo | En desacuerdo | En parte de acuerdo, en parte en desacuerdo | De acuerdo | Totalmente de acuerdo |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|-----------------------|
| a) Confío en que lograré el éxito que merezco en la vida                                    | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| b) Algunas veces me siento deprimido  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| c) Cuando lo intento, generalmente tengo éxito  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| d) Algunas veces, cuando fallo me siento inútil   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| e) Terminé mis tareas/labores con éxito   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| f) Algunas veces, <b>no</b> me siento en control de mi trabajo                              | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| g) En general, me siento satisfecho conmigo mismo   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| h) Estoy lleno de dudas sobre mi competencia  | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| i) Yo determino que es lo que ocurrirá en mi vida   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| j) <b>No</b> me siento en control del éxito de mi carrera                                   | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| k) Soy capaz de lidiar con la mayoría de mis problemas                                      | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |
| l) Algunas veces las cosas lucen desoladoras y desesperanzadoras para mí                    | 1                        | 2             | 3   | 4          | 5                     |



## IV. Datos generales

37. ¿Cuál es su edad? \_\_\_\_\_ años

38. Es usted...

☐ mujer

☐ hombre

39. Vive usted...

☐ Con su pareja o cónyuge

☐ Con sus padres / familiares / amigos

☐ Solo

40. ¿Tiene hijos?

☐ Sí    a) ¿Cuántos hijos(as)? \_\_\_\_\_    b) ¿Cuántos de sus hijos(as) son menores de 18 años? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ No

41. ¿Cuál es su contribución financiera a los ingresos del hogar?

☐ Único responsable (100%)

☐ Principal fuente de ingresos (aporte más de la mitad de los ingresos del hogar)

☐ Aporto alrededor de la mitad de los ingresos del hogar

☐ Contribuyo con menos del 50% a los ingresos del hogar

42. ¿Cuántas personas dependen de sus ingresos (sin incluirse a usted mismo)? \_\_\_\_\_ persona(s)

43. ¿Cuál es el máximo nivel educativo que usted ha completado?

☐ Educación primaria

☐ Educación secundaria

☐ Educación superior no universitaria

☐ Estudios universitarios

☐ Post grado

☐ Otro: .....

Por favor, verifique si ha respondido todas las preguntas.

**¡Muchas Gracias por su Colaboración!**